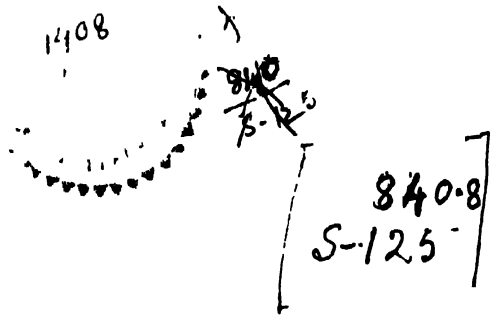


Selected Writings of

D E S A D E

Selected Writings of
DE SADE

Selected and translated by
Leonard de Saint-Yves



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PREFACE

PREFACE

When I was asked to select and translate work by the Marquis de Sade for publication in England I knew that there would be two major difficulties at the outset—the difficulty of obtaining authentic texts and the difficulty of publishing in English important sections of his work which public opinion and legal precedent hold to be obscene and blasphemous. The former difficulty was partly overcome with the help of the British Museum staff. The second difficulty raised problems which I as a translator had no power to solve; the result is that the picture of de Sade as a writer and thinker given here must necessarily be limited in scope.

The extracts which follow have been chosen in an attempt to show something of his development during the twenty years or so when he wrote most, i.e. between 1782 and 1802. Much of this work, notably *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*, was not published until the twentieth century, but it has been arranged here as far as possible in chronological order. In 1942 a great deal of new material in manuscript form was discovered at the castle of Comte Xavier de Sade, the descendant of the Marquis, in Normandy, but so far only a small collection of letters and some other fragments have been published. Until these discoveries were made it was not known that de Sade was writing as early as 1764 or as late as 1814, the year before his death.

The events of his life and all the ideas expressed in his books have been described and analysed at length, notably by Guillaume Apollinaire, Maurice Heine, Gilbert Lély, Maurice Nadeau and Simone de Beauvoir in France and by C. R. Dawes and Geoffrey Gorer in England. However, when Maurice Heine referred to de Sade some time ago as the least read among the most talked of writers, he was not very far from the truth. The orthodox 19th century attitude to the work of the Marquis was understandable, but the scientific approach of the twentieth century has not led to any spectacular change. The critics who have written about de Sade recently have at least read him, but they have decided after unbiassed reflec-

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tion that he is morally indefensible, that he discovered nothing new and wrote rather badly about a great number of disgusting and uninteresting things. The normal judgment of today on *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*, *La Nouvelle Justine* and *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir* is that they were the obscene* productions of a diseased mind or that they were written as deliberate pornography†, and that in any case it is not necessary to read them.

It appears therefore that sophisticated opinion about these extraordinary works shows a surprising similarity to the traditional horror with which they have always been viewed. And yet neither of the two judgments referred to above seem to be based on any very sound facts; there is very little likelihood that de Sade was mentally diseased or insane: Dr Royer-Collard's opinion in 1814, when de Sade was at Charenton—'ce n'est pas un aliéné'—sounds much more convincing in its context than Anatole France's condescending remarks nearly seventy years later about 'notre fou'. To assume that de Sade was not insane is to imply immediately that the whole problem of his personality is much more, not less complicated than it appeared originally, and the contrast between the obscene and the non-obscene work all the more striking and inexplicable. There are few authors whose entire work needs to be considered at the same level of concentration—usually a certain amount of it is only of academic interest. But with de Sade, if he is to be examined and understood in a level-headed way, there is very little that can be left out, because his range is so great and the extremes of his imagination so far-flung in unknown territory. During his lifetime he begged his detractors not to condemn him before reading to the end of whatever they were about to attack. The same holds good today, and

Obscene: offensive to modesty or decency; expressing or suggesting lewd thoughts.

† Pornographic: dealing in the obscene.

Pornography: description of the life, manners, etc., of prostitutes and their patrons; hence, the expression or suggestion of obscene or unchaste subjects in literature or art.

for a real understanding of his personality and work it is also necessary to read his correspondence, which unfortunately cannot be presented here. Not that it provides any ready answer, since in the case of *Justine*, for example, de Sade alternately admitted and denied that he wrote it. When he stated in a letter to his lawyer that he wrote the 1797 version of the book—*La Nouvelle Justine*—merely to please his printer he seems to have been suddenly frightened at the vividness of his own imagination, which had carried him further than he had ever intended to go. He denied the work in public, and no edition during his lifetime carried his name.

This attempt by de Sade to suggest that he was trying to write deliberate pornography does not ring true. Pornography is such an artificial form of writing that it rapidly becomes boring, quite apart from whether it disgusts or not; many isolated passages from de Sade could be classed as pornography, but it is precisely when they are considered in their context and their relationship to the book that contains them examined that they are seen to transcend their immediate content and to be in many cases inseparably bound up with ethical and philosophical questions of the greatest seriousness. De Sade could probably have chosen other methods of presenting his ideas, but for a variety of reasons he chose this one.

It might look therefore that the difficulty of presenting de Sade as a writer and thinker in any complete manner might be insurmountable. It would clearly be mis-stating the case also to suggest that the obscene and blasphemous side of his work was in any sense counterbalanced by, say, *Les Crimes de l'Amour*, *Aline et Valcour* or the funeral oration for Marat and Le Pelletier. But all these are terms in the de Sade equation.

As a writer he clearly had a great number of faults, some of them the failings which occur in so many of his contemporaries. He was prolix, a weakness which is accentuated not entirely because the twentieth century reader is impatient—and long novels are by no means unknown today—but because he repeats himself a great deal, sometimes within one book

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and certainly throughout his work as a whole. The result of this is that an unconventional argument may strike the reader the first time he comes across it but on the second or third occasion the force of the theory is blunted and it becomes merely a hobby-horse. The repetition of an inconoclastic statement can only make it more palatable if the gap between the existing and the desirable state of affairs is somehow filled in; but it may well be that this gap frightened de Sade or, as the events of his life during and after the Revolution appear to prove, he was almost entirely unconcerned about the practical application of his theories; in any case he made no attempt to close the gap.

To continue the catalogue of his faults, neither was he any better when it came to the construction of plot and characterisation in his novels. *Justine* is little more than a succession of incidents with very little connection between them; *Juliette* is more complex, still picaresque in outline and untidily constructed. *Aline et Valcour* contains three separate stories in addition to its main plot, which add up to a top-heavy whole. This latter book, however, in spite of its coincidences and melodrama, is not entirely remote from real life all the time, while the other two, in their combined edition as *La Nouvelle Justine* acquire a kind of descant which is pure fantasy. Every person and every event become so far-fetched that it might not be unreasonable to consider de Sade as insane.

The monsters he created prove him to be less of a pornographer than a surrealist; their exploits, which no doubt have a varied significance for the scientist, strike the ordinary reader as incredible or ridiculous. There are few of de Sade's figures who bring him any credit as a creator of character in fiction. He frequently gives vivid descriptions of someone's appearance and a brief analysis of his character, as for example the Bishop in *Les 120 Journées de Sodome*. He can also produce a strong sinister figure like Saint-Fond, although he is devoid of subtlety. In *Aline et Valcour* the cynical Portuguese, Sarmiento, who has gone native in Butua, comes to life more naturally than most of de Sade's characters. On the other hand

de Sade was never able to describe a woman except in the most conventional terms, unless she happened to be old and ugly. Justine, of course, is just a beautiful pure girl and her falling in love with the homosexual Bressac is one of the few occasions when she is something more than a symbol. Juliette, although she seems so much more complex and vivid than Justine, is not so much a fictional character as a nymphomaniac bluestocking, the embodiment of de Sade in his capacity of Satan. As a caricaturist de Sade had great power, and President Fontanis, the long-suffering hero of *Le Président Mystifié* is one of his most living creations, a product of close observation, irony and revenge.

Ever since he was young de Sade seems to have been fascinated by the stage, but this did not mean that he had any gift for bringing people to life as people apart from propagandists. When his newly-discovered plays are published it will be interesting to see whether he was capable of writing drama as apart from melodrama. There is a theatrical atmosphere about much of his writing, and although only two of his works are entirely in dialogue form—*Dialogue entre un Prêtre et un Moribond*, and *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir*—he often likes to present his conversations in this way. An obvious example is Juliette's interrogation by the *Société des Amis du Crime*. But *Oxtiern*, the only published play to date is a melodrama in the style of *Les Crimes de l'Amour* in which virtue and vice are crudely personified and virtue rewarded.

As far as the finer points of style are concerned de Sade loses heavily in any comparison with his predecessors and his contemporaries in the 18th century, but there are several reasons why this should be so. Although it is now known that he wrote journals and critical essays as a young man he did not consciously practice the craft of a professional writer until he was forced to live by his pen, and he published nothing until he was 51. He wrote a great amount of his work in prison, usually in a hurry, with nobody to advise or help him. Words were only tools to express all the tumult of ideas in his mind, and art for art's sake was unknown to him. In

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spite of his apparent preoccupation with the universal problems of the century he was more deeply concerned with others that none of his contemporaries had thought of, and in order to express them he was unconsciously searching for a means of expression that did not exist. If he had lived in the nineteenth or twentieth century it would have been easier for him, but living when he did it was inevitable that his style should reflect something of the chaos of his mind.

Maurice Heine saw in de Sade one of the unacknowledged precursors of romanticism and pointed out that *The Castle of Otranto*, which was translated in 1767, was probably known to him. De Sade admired Mrs Radcliffe and 'Monk' Lewis immensely, although their work was not translated until after his major writing was finished. It is not so much the actual style or even the spirit of his work which marks de Sade as a romantic, but the whole huge uncontrollable conception of *Les 120 Journées* and *La Nouvelle Justine*. There is every proof however that their writing was not the result of a suddenly-felt influence but that it fitted in with an unconsciously logical process of imagination that began when de Sade was still a relatively young man; his difficulty was that he could neither control nor express it adequately.

The mature de Sade of *La Nouvelle Justine* is foreshadowed clearly in *Le Dialogue entre Prêtre et un Moribond*, and although this work gives little indication of the blasphemous outpourings that were to come its voice is authentic, for there are no degrees of blasphemy, and however close the thought may come to contemporary anti-clericalism and scepticism, the intensity of its expression, the emotional quality of its very rationalism marks it as different in quality from much other work produced at the same time. The same voice that is heard so loudly in *Français, encore un effort*, the supposed pamphlet included in *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir*, is the tonic note in the harsh resonant chord of de Sade's work. It embodies all his obsessive preoccupation with destructiveness.

Of the two other notes which modify this one and prove

de Sade to be so much more complex than might be realised, there is first that which has already been referred to as virtue triumphant, and is associated nearly always with crude melodrama or unctuous, hypocritical smugness. It might be possible to attribute the writing in this vein to a desire on de Sade's part to prove that he could not possibly have written the obscene works of which he was suspected, especially as *Les Crimes de l'Amour* and *Alinè et Valcour*, the works mainly concerned, were written at the same time as *Justine* and published about the same time or just afterwards. The extraordinary thing is that de Sade wrote so much in this way, and that it should all have been so unconvincing and often childish, as far as plot and characterisation were concerned.

Lastly in the triad is the ironic humour which appears in the major works as devastating satire and in others as farce. One of the most amusing things de Sade wrote was *Le Président Mystifié*, even though it embodies his fierce hatred of the Aix justices who had earned him so many years in prison following the case of the poisoned sweets at Marseilles. This *conte* includes many of his characteristic attacks on authority and even something of the 'sadism' of the major works, although its expression is muted and oblique.

To return to the question as to whether de Sade's contribution was original in any precise way it cannot be argued that the philosophical and political content of his ideas was particularly new, although their expression is often astonishingly vivid and modern in tone. Apart from his anticipation of the Revolution de Sade is one of the few writers who wrote during the hectic years that followed and remained part of them.

Analysis shows therefore that de Sade's individuality is due more to a synthesis of qualities rather than to any particular innovation. The combination of qualities that merged in him is unexpected and the result unbalanced; when his deadly enemy, Restif de la Bretonne, called de Sade *le monstre auteur*, he was perhaps partly right, for de Sade is an oddity, a 'sport' of literary biology, and that is why he cannot be neglected.

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Perhaps one of the most remarkable things about de Sade is not so much that he was a prophet and a precursor, for they are after all not so rare, but that he survived as a whole personality. His books, his ideas, his life and the still unexplained key to his mind continue to preoccupy a great number of people and to give rise to passionate controversy. He is not so much an author who died a hundred and forty years ago but an author who is still alive, and who, by a trick of fate, continues to publish new books but who cannot join in the controversy about them or write to the papers. Furthermore he is not an easy problem for an age like the present one, which is so preoccupied with specialisation; he is too typical in his infinite range of interests of the encyclopaedic age which produced him, and yet untypical because he attempted to present scientific fact not only in literary terms but masked in a romanticism which was not to mature until after he died, and which in turn was itself subdued by science. Simone de Beauvoir, in her study, 'Must we Burn de Sade?' gives some indication of the degree to which he puzzles contemporary thinkers in so many fields: 'the supreme value of his testimony is that it disturbs us'. It is possible that it will continue to disturb us for the entire time that mankind will exist. It is not easy to say whether the next generation will include him in their histories of literature,* but he should at least be read before he is discarded.

A logical appreciation of de Sade is closely linked with important changes in human behaviour, concerned not with the sanctioning of moral anarchy but with the end of hypocrisy. The behaviour of the characters in de Sade's novels is something which for the time being is incomprehensible to us, but it is impossible to say yet whether de Sade wrote the science-fiction, *l'anticipation* of anthropology.

L. de S.-Y.

* 'Il ne nous appartient pas de citer ici ses ouvrages, d'une inspiration monstrueuse, mais que d'incontestables qualités d'analyse et de style rattachent néanmoins à la littérature. Boivin et Cie. R. Jasinsky. Histoire de la Littérature Française.'

**DIALOGUE ENTRE UN PRÉTRE ET
UN MORIBOND**

DIALOGUE ENTRE UN PRÊTRE ET UN MORIBOND

This *Dialogue*, written in 1782, is the earliest complete work of de Sade which has been published and is given here in its entirety. When he wrote it he had been in Vincennes prison for three years. It is less diffuse and superficially at least more 'logical' in its reasoning than many passages which de Sade was to write later discussing the nature of the universe and the existence of God.

The *Dialogue* was first published in 1926 by Stendhal & Cie, Paris, with a foreword by Maurice Heine.

* * * * *

PRIEST Now that you have reached the fatal moment when the veil of illusion is only torn aside to enable the misguided man to see the cruel tableau of his vices and mistakes do you not repent, my son, of the manifold errors to which weakness and human frailty have led you?

DYING MAN Yes, my friend, I repent.

PRIEST Profit then from this blessed remorse to obtain from Heaven in the short interval which remains to you, general absolution for your sins, and consider that it is only by the mediation of the very holy sacrament of penitence that you may receive it from the eternal God.

DYING MAN I understand you no more than you understood me.

PRIEST What?

DYING MAN I told you that I had repented.

PRIEST I heard it.

DYING MAN Yes, but without understanding it.

PRIEST What is your interpretation?

DYING MAN Here is my meaning. I was created by Nature with most active tastes, sent into the world solely to surrender myself to them, and to satisfy those desires. As these effects of

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my creation are only the necessities relative to the first designs of Nature, or, if you prefer it, the developments essential to her projects for me, due to her laws, I only repent that I did not recognise sufficiently all her power, and my sole remorse merely extends to the mediocre use I have made of those faculties (which you would call criminal, I natural) given me by Nature for her service. Sometimes I resisted her and that I repent. Blinded by the absurdity of your doctrines, through them I have fought all the violence of the desires communicated to me through a much more divine inspiration, and I repent gathering only flowers when I could have taken a generous harvest of fruit. These are the exact motives for my regrets. Esteem me highly enough not to attribute others to me.

PRIEST: Where are your errors leading you, where are your sophistries taking you! You lend to the thing created all the power of its creator, and you do not see that these unfortunate inclinations which have misguided you are only the effects of this corrupt nature to which you attribute all power.

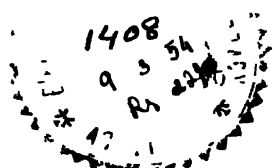
DYING MAN: It seems to me, friend, that your dialectic is as false as your thought. I wish you would either reason more exactly or leave me to die in peace. What do you mean by creator, and what do you understand by corrupt nature?

PRIEST: The creator is the master of the universe, he who has made all, created all, and who conceives all by a simple effect of his entire power.

DYING MAN: He is a great man, obviously. Now, tell me why such a man who is so powerful has nevertheless made, according to you, a corrupt nature?

PRIEST: What merit would men possess, if God had not left them freedom of choice, and what merit would they enjoy if there were not on this earth the possibility of doing good, and that of avoiding evil?

DYING MAN: And so your God has wished to make everything crooked solely to tempt or to try his creature. Does He not know that creature then, is He in any doubt of the result?



PRIEST: He knows him, doubtless, but once again He wishes to leave him the merit of choosing.

DYING MAN: To what good, once He knows the decision His creature will take, and only holds to it, since you call Him all powerful, to make him choose the good?

PRIEST: Who can understand the immense infinite designs of God for man? Who can understand all that we see?

DYING MAN: He who simplifies things, my friend. Above all, he who does not multiply causes the better to confuse effects. What need is there for a second difficulty when you cannot explain the first? Since it is possible that nature alone has made all that you attribute to your God, why look for a master for her? The cause of that which you cannot understand is perhaps the most simple thing in the world. Improve your physics and you will understand nature better, purify your reasoning, banish your prejudices, and you will no longer need your God.

PRIEST: Unhappy man, I thought you only a Socinian, and I had arms to combat you with, but I see indeed that you are an atheist. Since your heart is closed to the immensity of the authentic proofs that we receive every day of the existence of the Creator, I have no more to say to you. You cannot give back the light to a blind man.

DYING MAN: My friend, agree with me on one point, that of two men, the one who is the more blind is he who puts a bandage on his eyes, rather than he who tears it off. You build up, invent and multiply causes. I destroy, I simplify. You pile error upon error. I fight all of them. Which of us is the blind one?

PRIEST: You do not believe in God?

DYING MAN: No, and for a very simple reason. It is quite impossible to believe what one does not understand. There must exist immediate connections between understanding and faith. Understanding is the first nourishment of faith. Where understanding does not have some influence, faith is dead, and in such a case those who claim to have it, deceive themselves. I defy you yourself to believe in the God you preach.

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to me—because you do not know how to prove His existence to me, because you are unable to define Him to me, and consequently you do not understand Him—since you do not understand Him, you can no longer give me a single reasonable proof of Him, and finally all that is beyond the limit of the human mind is either illusion or uselessness. As your God can only be one or the other of these two things, I would be a fool to believe in Him in the first case, and an imbecile in the second. My friend, prove to me, the inertia of matter, and then I will grant you your Creator, prove that nature is not self-sufficient, and I will allow you to suppose a master for her; until then, expect nothing from me. I give in only to evidence, which I receive only through my senses; where they stop, my faith remains powerless. I believe in the sun because I see it, I conceive it as the centre of reunion of all the inflammable matter of nature, its periodic march pleases me without astonishing me. It is an operation of physics, as simple perhaps as those of electricity, but which we are not permitted to understand. What need have I to go any further? Even when you will have built up your God above that, am I any more advanced, will I not need as much effort to understand the workman as to define his work? Therefore you do me no service by the erection of your chimera, you have troubled my mind but you have not enlightened it, and I owe you only hate for it, not gratitude. Your God is a machine, made by you to serve your passions, and fashioned according to their whim, but as it restricts mine, except the fact that I have overthrown it and do not, at the very moment when my feeble soul has need of calm and philosophy, come frightening it with your sophistries, which would scare without convincing, and irritate without improving. This soul is my friend, what it has pleased nature it might be, the result, that is to say, of the organs she has been pleased to form in me by virtue of her designs and needs; since she has an equal need of vices and virtues, when it has pleased her to lead me to the former she has done so, when the latter, she has inspired me with desires for them,

and I have followed suit just the same. Look no further than her laws for the sole cause of human inconsequence, and do not seek for any other principles in her laws than her wishes and her needs.

PRIEST: I therefore everything in the world is necessary.

DYING MAN: Certainly.

PRIEST: But if everything is necessary, then everything is regulated.

DYING MAN: Who has said the contrary?

PRIEST: I then who can regulate everything as it is, except an all-wise, all-powerful hand?

DYING MAN: Is it not necessary for powder to flare up if you set a light to it?

PRIEST: Yes

DYING MAN: And what wisdom do you find in that?

PRIEST: No :c.

DYING MAN: It is possible then that things may be necessary without wisdom, and possible therefore that everything may stem from a first cause which has within it neither reason nor wisdom.

PRIEST: What are you trying to prove?

DYING MAN: To prove to you that all can be as it is, and as you see it, without any wise or reasonable cause to guide it; that natural effects must have natural causes without any need to imagine anti-natural ones for them, such as your God would be, who, as I have already told you, would Himself need explanation without providing any. Since your God, therefore, is good for nothing, he is entirely useless; there is a great likelihood that all which is useless is null, and all which is null is void. So to convince myself that your God is an illusion I need no other reasoning than that furnished by the certainty of uselessness.

PRIEST: On that ground there seems to me little necessity to speak to you of religion.

DYING MAN: Why not? Nothing amuses me like proof of the excess to which men, on that point, have been able to carry fanaticism and imbecility. These kinds of terrors are so fan-

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tastic that to me the picture, although horrible, is always interesting. Answer me frankly, and above all banish egoism. If I were weak enough to let myself be ensnared by your ridiculous arguments on the fabulous existence of the being who makes religion necessary, in what form would you advise me to offer him my worship? Would you have me adopt the reveries of Confucius rather than the absurdities of Brama, should I venerate the great serpent of the negroes, the star of the Peruvians, or Moses' God of Battle?"To which of the sects of Mohammed would you have me turn, or what heresy of the Christians would, according to you, be preferable? Be careful how you reply.

PRIEST: Can there be any doubt about it?

DYING MAN: It is therefore egotistical.

PRIEST: No, to advise what I believe in is to love you as much as myself.

DYING MAN: And it is loving both of ourselves too little to listen to such errors.

PRIEST: Oh! Who can blind himself to the miracles of our divine Redeptor?

DYING MAN: He who only sees in Him the most ordinary of all charlatans and the most unconvincing of all imposters.

PRIEST: Oh Gods, you hear him and you do not thunder!

DYING MAN: No, my friend, all is calm, because your God—whether it is from impotence or reason or whatever you will in a being whom I only admit for one moment out of condescension to you, or, if you prefer it, in order to lend myself to your pettiness—because your God, I say, if He exists, as you in your foolishness believe, cannot in order to convince me use means as ridiculous as those your Jesus imagines.

PRIEST: And what of the prophecies, miracles, martyrs—are they not all proofs?

DYING MAN: How can you logically expect me to admit as proof all that which must be proved itself. Before a prophecy can be accepted as proof I must first have absolute assurance that it has been made. Being dependent on history for it, it can have no more force for me than all other historical facts, of

which three quarters are highly doubtful. If I add to that the more than probable supposition that they have been handed down to me only by prejudiced historians, I will, as you see, be more than right to doubt them. Who can assure me, furthermore, that this prophecy has not been made after the event, that it has not been the effect of the combination of that very simple policy which sees a happy reign under a just king—or frost in wintertime. And if that is so, how can you hope that prophecy, being in such need of proof, can itself become a proof? As for your miracles, they impress me no more. All the tricksters have performed them, and all the blockheads have believed them. To persuade me of the truth of a miracle, I must be quite sure that the event which you so call a miracle was in fact absolutely contrary to the laws of nature, for only something outside them can pass for a miracle; who knows enough of nature to dare to say that at this point precisely she stops, and at this moment precisely she is transgressed? Only two things are needed to give colour to an alleged miracle, a clown and a few feeble men. Well, look no further for the origin of yours, all the new sectarians have them, and, what is strangest, all have found halfwits to believe them. Your Jesus has done nothing more remarkable than Apollonius of Thiana, yet no one pretends to take him for a god. As for your martyrs, they are undoubtedly the feeblest of all your arguments. It needs only fanaticism and resistance to create them; let the other side offer me as much as yours, I would never be sufficiently persuaded to believe one better than the other, but most inclined, on the other hand, to suppose them both pitiful. Oh, my friend, if it were true that the God you preach existed, would he need miracles, martyrs, and prophecies to establish his dominion: If, as you say, the heart of man were his workmanship, would not that be the very sanctuary he would choose for his law? This equal law, since it originates from a just God, would find itself irresistibly engraved in everyone, and from one end of the universe to the other all men, alike in the possession

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of this sensitive and delicate organ, would be equally alike in the homage they would render the God from whom they hold it. All men would have only one way of loving Him, one way of worshipping or serving Him, and it would be as impossible for them to ignore this God as to resist the secret attraction of His worship. But what do I see instead in the world—as many gods as countries, as many varieties of service to them as there are different heads or different types of imaginations. Yet, according to you, this multiplicity of opinions amongst which it is physically impossible for me to choose is the work of a just God. Away, preacher, you despoil your God in presenting Him to me in that fashion. Leave me to deny Him utterly, for if He exists, I offend Him less by my disbelief than you by your blasphemies. Come back to the path of reason, preacher, your Jesus is no more worthy than Mahommed, Mahommed no more than Moses, and all three no more than Confucius, who in fact pronounced some good principles while the other three spoke nonsense. But generally, all these people are nothing but imposters, whom the philosopher mocks, the rabble believe, and justice should have caused to hang.

PRIEST: Alas, she did, only too well for one of the four.

DYING MAN: The most deserving of them all; he was seditious, turbulent, slanderous, deceptive, libertine, vulgar comedian and dangerous rogue; he possessed the knack of imposing on the people, and therefore became fit for punishment in a kingdom of that State in which Jerusalem was then found. It was very wise to get rid of him, and this is perhaps the only case where my otherwise gentle and tolerant maxims can permit the severity of Themis; I pardon all errors except those which may become dangerous for the government under which we live. Kings and their majesties are the only things which impress me, which I respect—and he who does not love his king and country is not fit to live.

PRIEST: But look, you admit the existence of something after this life; it is impossible that in your mind you have not

frequently amused yourself by trying to pierce the thick shadows of the fate which awaits us. What system then can be more satisfactory than one that allots a multitude of punishments for the evildoer and an infinity of blessings for the righteous?

DYING MAN: What, my friend? The idea of oblivion has never frightened me, and it holds only consolation and simplicity for me. All other systems are the product of pride, this alone of reason. Besides, oblivion is neither terrible nor absolute. Do I not see daily examples of the everlasting generation and regeneration of nature? Nothing perishes, my friend, nothing in this world is destroyed. A man today, worms tomorrow, a fly the day after—is this not everlasting life? And why should I be rewarded for virtues which I do not merit, or punished for crimes for which I was never responsible? Can you reconcile the benevolence of your alleged God with such a system? Could He have wanted to create me just for the pleasure of punishing me, and that only because of a choice of which He does not allow me to be master?

PRIEST: But you are.

DYING MAN: Yes, according to your presumptions; but reason destroys them, and the theory of the Freedom of Man was only ever invented in order to develop that of grace which is so favourable to your dreams. Where in all the world is the man who seeing the scaffold beside the crime would still commit it if he were free not to? We are drawn along by an irresistible force, and not for one moment do the masters of that power choose any path for us but that towards which we are inclined. There is not a single virtue which is not necessary to nature, and conversely not a single crime which is not necessary. It is in the perfect balance maintained between one and the other that nature's whole knowledge resides. But can we be blamed for the side on which she casts us? No more than the wasp can be blamed who plunges his sting into your flesh.

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PRIEST: And so the greatest of all crimes should inspire no fear in us.

DYING MAN: I did not say so. It is enough for the law to condemn it and the sword of justice punish it to fill us with fear or aversion, but as soon as it is unfortunately committed we must know how to make up our minds and not give way to barren remorse, the effect of which is in vain, since it has not deterred us from committing the crime, and empty since it does not make it good. It is therefore absurd to give way to it, and even more absurd to fear punishment in the other world if we have been lucky enough to escape it in this. God forbid that I intend to encourage crime, it must be avoided wherever possible, but we must learn to abstain from it by reason and not by false fears which come to nothing, and the effects of which are so soon destroyed in any soul with but a little firmness. Reason, yes, my friend, reason alone should warn us that doing harm to our fellows can never make us happy, and our heart should tell us that to contribute to their happiness is the greatest happiness for us that nature allows us on this earth. All human morality is enclosed in this one saying "*Make others as happy as you wish to be yourself*" and never do them more harm than you would be willing to suffer yourself. There, my friend, those are the only principles we need to observe, and there is no call for religion or God to admit and appreciate them, a good heart is all that we need!

But I feel I am getting weaker, preacher. Leave your prejudices, be a man, be human, without fear and without hope. Leave your Gods and your religions. All that is of no use except to put weapons into men's hands; the name alone of all those horrors has caused more blood to be shed in the world than all other wars and disasters put together. Renounce the idea of another world—there is none. Do not renounce the pleasure of enjoying and causing happiness in this world. That is the only chance that nature offers you of doubling or extending your existence.

Dialogue

My friend, sensual pleasure was always the dearest of my possessions. I have worshipped it all my life and I wish to embrace it in my end. That end is near. Six women, more lovely than the day, are waiting in this next room; I was reserving them for this moment. Take your share, and try by my example to forget on their breasts all the vain sophistries or superstition, all the ridiculous errors of hypocrisy.

NOË

The dying man rang the bell, and the women entered: in their arms the preacher became a man corrupted by nature because he had not known how to explain what corrupt nature was.

LES 120 JOURNEES DE SODOME

LES 120 JOURNEES DE SODOME

Les 120 Journées de Sodome ou l'École du Libertinage is practically a quarter of a million words in length, but even then only thirty of the 'days' are described in detail. De Sade wrote this work during two months in 1785 when he was imprisoned in the Bastille. He wrote each day from ten in the morning until ten at night, covering the pages closely with minute handwriting. He then stuck the pages end to end, forming a long scroll. When he left the Bastille in 1789 the MS remained there along with other of his MSS, but later came into the possession of a French family who kept it for several generations before it was first published by Dr. Iwan Bloch in 1904. It has been reprinted once since then. A German translation was published in 1909.

De Sade's original plan was to describe every possible type of sexual perversion; four old courtesans were to describe five perversions every evening for four months, by relating incidents from their own past. The audience included the four profiteers described in the introduction, their wives, and twenty-eight men and women who served their pleasures.

Les 120 Journées represents the first attempt ever made to catalogue sexual perversions. As de Sade possessed none of the scientific vocabulary used today he was forced to employ terms which are thought just as obscene now as they were when he was alive.

* * * * *

The extensive wars which Louis XIV was forced to wage in the course of his reign, and which exhausted the wealth of the state and the strength of the people, nevertheless possessed the secret of enriching an enormous quantity of those leeches always on the watch for public calamities which they cause instead of stopping, and that only in order to be ready to profit from them to more advantage. The end of this reign so sublime in other respects, is perhaps one of the epochs of the French Empire when one saw most of these obscurely-made fortunes

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which were evident in luxury and debauchery as underhand as they were themselves. It was towards the end of this reign and shortly before the Regent had attempted, by the famous tribunal known under the name of the Chamber of Justice to seize by the throat this multitude of merchants that four among them conceived the extraordinary feast of debauchery that we are about to relate. It would be wrong to suppose that only commoners concerned themselves with money extortions, for the leaders of this whole affair were men of great consequence. The *Duke of Blangis* and his brother, the *Bishop of —*, who had both acquired enormous fortunes by this means, are absolute proof that the nobility, just as little as other people, did not despise such methods in order to enrich themselves. Both these important personalities, who were closely allied, in their pleasures as well as in their business transactions, with the celebrated *Durcet* and the *Président de Curval* were the first who really conceived the debauchery, the history of which we are to relate. After they had communicated this idea to their two friends, all four of them became the actors taking part in the famous orgies.

Some six years ago these four libertines who were linked very closely together because of the similarity of their material possessions, as well as in their tastes, had contrived, by means of certain ties, to draw the bonds that united them, in which licence was a consideration above all other motives, still closer together. The arrangements they made were as follows. The *Duke of Blangis*, three times a widower, one of whose wives had left him two daughters, had noticed that the *Président de Curval* had shown some inclination to marry the elder daughter, in spite of the fact that he was well aware of the familiarities which the father had permitted himself with his daughter. The Duke, as I say, conceived all at once this triple match: 'You want to have *Julie* for your wife', he said to Curval, 'I give her to you without hesitation, and only make one condition, that you will not grow jealous, if she, although your wife, will contrive to show the same favours to me which I have always received from her in the past. And, further, that you

agree that we should ask our mutual friend *Durcet* that he should give me his daughter *Constance*, for whom I must admit there have awakened in me the same feelings as yours for *Julie*'.

'But', Curval replied, 'it is surely not unknown to you that *Durcet*, a libertine similar to yourself. . .'

'I know everything that can be known', the Duke interrupted, 'but surely in our age and to our way of thinking such trifles are no objection? Do you think that I want a wife in order to make her my mistress? I want one so that she may serve my peculiarities and moods, and in order to cover up a multitude of excesses. The mantle of Hymen serves very well for such a purpose. In short I desire his daughter in the same way as you desire mine. Do you suppose that your desires and purposes are unknown to me? We libertines take women to be our slaves. Their role as wives makes them more submissive to us than if they were our mistresses; and you well know what importance despotism assumes among those pleasures that we prefer'.

During this conversation *Durcet* entered. The two friends informed him of the content of their talk, and *Durcet*, delighted with this beginning, which would permit him to indulge the same feelings for *Adelaide*, the President's daughter, accepted the Duke as a son-in-law on condition that he in turn would become the son-in-law of *Curval*.

The three marriages were very soon solemnised, the dowries were enormous and the marriage contracts identical.

The President, who was as guilty as his two friends, had communicated to *Durcet* his secret relations with his own daughter, without thereby repelling the latter in the slightest.

In this manner the three fathers, each of whom determined to conserve his rights, agreed that these rights should be further expanded so that the three young women who were bound by name and worldly goods and chattels to their respective husbands only, would belong, as far as their bodies were concerned, no more to one of the three friends than to the two others, and would expose themselves to the most severe punishments

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if they allowed themselves to transgress any of the rules to which they had been subjected.

Everything was thus happily arranged when the Bishop, who was already in alliance through pleasure with the two friends of his brother, proposed to add a fourth subject, if they would allow him to have his share of the three other women. This subject, the second daughter of the Duke, and the Bishop's niece, had a much closer relationship with the latter than anyone suspected. The Bishop had had contacts with his sister-in-law, and both brothers knew for certain that the existence of this young person, whose name was Aline, was due much more to the Bishop than to the Duke. The Bishop had been attracted to Aline when she was still in her cradle and had watched her grow up to the age of youthful loveliness. He was an equal of his friends, and his proposal sprang from a similar depth of depravity. Since however the beauty and sweet youth of Aline were even superior to those of her colleagues, they did not hesitate to enter into this transaction. The Bishop then gave her up so long as his own rights to the others were guaranteed, and each one of our four chief characters became in this manner the husband of four beautiful women.

This general arrangement, then, which we recapitulate for the benefit of our readers, was that the Duke became the father of Julie, the husband of Constance, Durcet's daughter; that Durcet, Constance's father, became the husband of Adelaide, the President's daughter; that the President, the father of Adelaide, became the husband of Julia, the Duke's elder daughter; and finally that the Bishop, uncle and father of Aline, became the husband of the three other women while he abandoned Aline to his friends on condition that his own rights to her would be respected.

The gay weddings were celebrated on a splendid estate belonging to the Duke situated in the Bourbon district, and I leave it to the reader to imagine the orgies that were enacted, for the necessity to describe many others does not allow us the pleasure of describing these. After their return to the estate the association of our four friends became closer still and as it

is important to understand this relationship fully, it is necessary to mention a detail which, it seems to me, throws some light on the character of these libertines, until we shall reach the point where we shall introduce each one separately in order to inspect him more closely still.

The group had created a communal fund which was administered by each one of them in turn for six months, but the sum of money in this fund, which was only to serve for pleasure, was immense. Their excessive fortune allowed them very strange things in that respect and the reader should not be surprised when he learns that there were two millions each year allocated solely for the pleasures of good food and sensuality.

Four famous procuresses who had nothing else to do but comb Paris and the provinces in order to produce women, of one kind and another, who might best contribute to the satisfaction of their hosts.

As a rule four suppers were arranged in the course of the week, each on in a different country house situated in the most remote district from Paris. The first of these suppers was devoted exclusively to the devotees of sodomy and only men were introduced. These generally consisted of sixteen young men between the ages of twenty and thirty, whose exceptional abilities permitted our four gentlemen, assuming the role of women, to enjoy the most extreme sensual pleasures.

JUSTINE

JUSTINE

Of all de Sade's work that which is most widely known, if only by hearsay, is *Justine*. Even during the lifetime of de Sade this was the book which caused the most sensation among the public and the most trouble to the author.

There are three different books telling the story of Justine. In 1787 de Sade wrote *Les Infortunes de la Vertu*, working from June 23rd to July 8th. This was only a sketch for a book, not a novel intended for publication, and (according to Maurice Heine) until Guillaume Apollinaire mentioned the Bibliothèque Nationale MS in 1909, it does not seem to have been known to anyone. Maurice Heine transcribed and published it in 1930.

The expanded version of this sketch, *Justine ou les Malheurs de la Vertu*, appeared in 1791 (a year after de Sade left Charenton), published by Girouard in the rue du Bout-du-Monde. With some modifications the book went through six editions in ten years. In June, 1791, de Sade wrote to his lawyer Gaufridy, saying, 'A novel of mine is being printed. But it is too immoral to be sent to a man so well behaved, pious and decent as you. I needed money, my printer asked me to make it very spicy and I've made it capable of corrupting the devil. It is called *Justine ou les Malheurs de la Vertu*. If by chance it falls into your hands burn it, do not read it. I renounce it'. A few years previously, in the *Catalogue Raisonné des oeuvres de l'auteur à l'époque du 1er octobre 1788*, de Sade had said of what was to be his first published novel, 'There is no story or novel in all the literature of Europe where the *genre sombre* is carried to a degree more frightening and more pathetic'.

Finally, in 1797, came the last and longest version, *La Nouvelle Justine*, which was linked with the story of Justine's sister, *Juliette ou les Prosopéités du Vice*. The two books accounted for four and six volumes respectively and the combined edition included a hundred engravings.

The heroine Justine is the embodiment of virtue and is doomed to suffer every possible form of torture, outrage and evil at the hands of a succession of monsters, perverts or criminals whom she meets in her wanderings. Usually she suffers passively, sometimes, if she attempts a good deed, her own actions turn against her. Between descriptions of orgies or

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crimes in which sexual desire and destructiveness are often inseparable—for example the villainous surgeon Rodin tries to make love to a girl while performing a lethal operation on her—there are discussions or speeches in which the characters express the author's views on a multitude of ethical, moral, religious and political problems. These speeches, which invariably attack all accepted standards of thought and behaviour, show the extremes to which rationalism can be taken. At a first reading some of the speeches, morality apart, have a certain incisiveness, even though they do not bear analysis; at their worst they are rambling, repetitive and derivative.

Having escaped from one misfortune, Justine is immediately involved in another. While hiding in a wood she sees a nobleman and his valet performing acts of sodomy.

* * * * *

Oh, how long this time seemed to Justine, and what a torture to virtue is the obligation to contemplate crime.

At last the scandalous actors of this scene, doubtless satisfied, stood up to return to the road that would lead them back home, when the master, approaching the bush. saw the tip of the kerchief swathing Justine's head.

• 'Jasmin,' he said to his valet, 'we are betrayed. . . we are discovered. . . A woman. . . an impure creature has observed our mysteries. . . Let us approach. . . let us get that whore out of there and learn the reason which put her there'.

But the trembling Justine did not give them time to drag her out of her hiding place: she broke out of it herself, immediately. And falling at the feet of her discoverers, she exclaimed, her arms stretched out towards them, 'Oh sirs, condescend to have pity on an unfortunate whose fate is more grievous than you believe. There are very few misfortunes which can equal mine. Let not the situation in which you have found me engender any suspicion about myself—it is the result of poverty rather than of my sins. Far from increasing the evils which overwhelm me, pray diminish them by making it easy for me to escape the torments which pursue me'.

M. de Bressac—such was the name of the young man into whose hands Justine had fallen—amply endowed with wickedness, was not supplied with a very abundant stock of commiseration. It is, unfortunately, only too common to see luxuriousness extinguish pity in the hearts of men. Its ordinary effect is to harden; whether because the great majority of man's deceits necessitate apathy of the soul, or the violent shock this passion produces upon the majority of nerves diminishes the strength of their action, it is still a fact that the libertine is rarely a man of sensitivity.

But in Bressac, further to this hardness, natural to the type of persons we are speaking of, there was coupled a profound disgust for women. . . such an inveterate hatred for all which is characteristic of the sex—which he called INFAMOUS—that Justine would have had great difficulty to succeed in evoking in him those sentiments which it was her concern to inspire.

'Well, my little dove,' said Bressac to her, coldly, 'if you are looking for dupes, try better company. Neither I nor my friend ever touch women. They are horrible in our eyes and we carefully avoid them. If it is alms you are after, try people who like good deeds—we only perform bad ones. But tell me, wretch, did you see what passed between this young man and myself?'

'I saw you talking on the grass,' said the prudent Justine. 'Nothing else, sirs, I swear.'

'I would like to believe it,' said Bressac, 'and for your sake. If I thought you had seen anything else you would never leave that bush. . . Jasmin, it is early yet, we have time to hear this girl's story. Let us listen, and afterwards we shall see what needs to be done.'

The young men sat down: Justine placed herself beside them, and related to them with her usual frankness all the misfortunes which had oppressed her since her arrival in this world.

And that for the sole reason that sensitivity proves weakness, and libertinage strength. (Author's note.)

'Come Jasmin,' said Bressac, getting to his feet, 'let us for once be just. Equitable Themis has condemned this creature. Do not let us allow the designs of this goddess to be so cruelly frustrated. Let us make the delinquent suffer the death sentence that she would have undergone. This petty murder, so far from being a crime, will only be a reparation in the moral order. Since we sometimes have the misfortune to disturb it, let us, when the opportunity arises, re-establish it bravely'.

And the cruel man lifted the unfortunate girl from the ground and began to drag her towards the centre of the wood, laughing at her tears and cries.

'First of all, let us undress her,' said Bressac, tearing away all the veils of decency and modesty, without the attractions that this operation revealed to him in any way softening a man hardened to all the wiles of a sex that he despised. 'What a nasty creature is a woman,' he said, rolling her over and over on the ground with his foot. 'Oh, Jasmin' Come, no pity.'

And immediately the poor girl was bound to a tree with a rope that her masters created out of their cravats and handkerchiefs.

'This time, her fear is punishment enough,' said Bressac. 'Justine,' he continued, untying her bonds and ordering her to get dressed, 'keep a discreet tongue, and follow us. If you attach yourself to me, you will have no cause to repent of it. My mother needs a second woman. I shall present you to her, and on the truth of your story, I will answer to her for your conduct. But if you abuse my kindness, betray my confidence, or refuse to submit to my intentions, then, Justine, look at these trees. Examine the ground they overhang, which would become your burial place, and remember that this unhappy spot is but a league from the château to which I am taking you, and that at the slightest fault on your part you will be brought back here immediately'.

The flimsiest sign of happiness is to the unfortunate what the restorative dew of the morning is to the flower dried up the day before by the burning fires of the sun. In tears, Justine

cast herself at the feet of her seeming protector, swearing to be obedient and to conduct herself well. But the barbarous Bressac, as insensible to this dear child's joy as to her grief, said to her coldly, 'We shall see. . .' and they set off.

Jasmin and his master spoke together in whispers. Justine followed them humbly without saying a word. An hour and a quarter was enough to bring them to the château of Madame de Bressac—the luxury and magnificence of which showed Justine that whatever post might be destined for her in this house, it could surely be only advantageous to her if the malevolent hand which had never ceased to torment her did not reappear to trouble the flattering prospects which seemed to be opening up before her eyes.

Half an hour after his arrival the young man presented her to his mother.

Mme de Bressac was a woman of forty-five, still beautiful, respectable and sensitive, but astonishingly severe concerning morals. Vainglorious of the fact that she had never made one false step all her life, she did not forgive any weakness in others, and by this extreme severity, far from earning the tenderness of her son, she had, so to speak, repelled him from her bosom. Bressac had many faults, it is agreed. But where should indulgence build her temple if not in a mother's heart? A widow since the death of the young man's father two years before, Mme de Bressac possessed an income of 100,000 écus, which, joined with the provision more than twice as great from the fortune of his father, would one day assure our villain, as can be seen, an annual revenue of nearly a million. Despite such great expectations Mme de Bressac gave her son little; would an allowance of 25,000 francs be sufficient to pay for his pleasures? There is nothing so expensive as this kind of pleasure.

Nothing had been able to bring the young Bressac to service. Everything which distracted him from his debauchery was so insupportable in his eyes that he could not suffer its bond.

For three months of the year Mme de Bressac lived on the

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estate where Justine first met her; the remainder of the time she spent in Paris. During this three months of country life, however, she insisted that her son should never leave her. A cruel punishment for a young man who detested his mother, and regarded as lost every moment spent away from the city that was for him the centre of pleasure!

Bressac ordered Justine to recount to his mother the events that she had related to him. As soon as she had finished, the worthy woman said to her, 'Your frankness and naivety convince me beyond any doubt that you are genuine. I shall make no other enquiries about you except to verify that you really are the daughter of the man you tell me you are. If so, I knew your father, and that will be one more reason for interesting myself in you. As for the Delmonse affair, I take it upon myself to settle that with a couple of visits to the Chancellor, who has been my friend for ages. Besides, that creature is an abandoned, debauched woman of no reputation whom I would have locked up if I wished. But take heed, Justine', added Mme de Bressac, 'that what I am now promising you is only at the price of irreproachable conduct. And so you see that the results of the gratitude that I demand will always turn to your profit'.

Justine threw herself at her benefactress' feet, assuring her that she would have every cause to be contented with her, and she was at once put in possession of her post.

Three days later, the information sought by Mme de Bressac arrived, and was most satisfactory. Justine was praised for her frankness, and all ideas of misfortune vanished from her mind, giving place to the most serene of hopes.

But Heaven had not decreed that this dear girl was ever to be happy, and if a few moments of tranquillity fortuitously came her way, it was only to make more bitter the horrors which were to succeed them.

They had hardly returned to Paris before Mme de Bressac hastened to work on her maid's account. The calumnies of La Delmonse were exposed, but she herself was out of reach,

* The Comtesse Delmonse had taken Justine into service and later caused her to be sent to prison. (Trans.)

she having left some days earlier for America to take up a rich legacy that had become due to her, Heaven wished her to enjoy her crimes in peace. There are all too many occasions when the inconsistent equity of Heaven weighs hard only upon the virtuous. It must not be forgotten that we are only publishing these facts in order to convince our readers of this truth. It is sad, but it is no less essential that it be revealed so that all may regulate their conduct in the events of this life by it.

With regard to the burning of the Palace prisons it was accepted that even if Justine had profited by this incident at least she had had no hand in it; and she was assured that the charges against her would be destroyed without any need for the magistrates concerned to use further formalities. The poor girl heard no more of it.

If, up to now, the reader has acquired a fairly extensive knowledge of our heroine's soul, it is easy to picture how such actions bound her affectionately to Mme de Bressac. Justine, young, weak, and sensitive, was delighted to open her heart to the emotions of gratitude. Foolishly persuaded that an act of benevolence should bind the receiver to the person from whom it emanates, the poor girl poured out at leisure all the energy of her ingenuous soul in the cult of this puerile sentiment. The intention, however, was far from the young man's mind to enslave Justine so strongly to the interests of a mother he could not tolerate.

But we think that here is the opportunity to portray this new character.

To the charm of his youth, Bressac enjoined a most attractive appearance. If his features or his figure had any faults, it was because they came somewhat close to that nonchalance . . . that softness, which belongs only to women. It seemed as if Nature, in bestowing on him the attributes of that sex, had inspired him equally with its tastes. But what a soul was buried beneath these feminine attractions! It contained every vice that characterised those of the greatest criminals. Nowhere were there such extremes of malice, vengeance, cruelty, atheism, debauchery, utter neglect of all duties and

principally of those which less powerfully constituted souls seemed to make their delights. This singular young man's prime mania was to detest royally his mother, and unfortunately this hatred, based on his principles, was nourished within him both on arguments that permitted no reply and also on the powerful interest that he must inevitably have had in getting rid of her as soon as possible. Mme de Bressac did her best to guide her son back to the path of virtue; but in this she showed herself too strict. The result was that the young man, more excited by the effects of this truth only abandoned himself with greater recklessness to his tastes, and from her endeavours the poor woman only gathered a harvest of hatred that was infinitely stronger.

'Do not imagine,' said Bressac one day to Justine, 'that it is of herself that my mother takes so active an interest in you. Understand that if I were not nagging her at every moment, she would scarcely remember the attentions she has promised you. She makes you appreciate every step she takes, whereas they are nothing but my work. Yes, Justine, it is to me alone that you owe the gratitude you lavish upon my mother, and what I demand from you must seem all the more disinterested since you know well that, however young and pretty you may be, I make no claim to your favours. No, dear girl, no. Endowed with disdain for all that can be obtained from a woman. . . for her very person, the services that I expect from you are of a very different kind; and when you are fully convinced of what I have done for your peace of mind, I hope I shall find in your heart all that I have a right to expect'.

Such speeches, frequently repeated, seemed so obscure to Justine that she did not know how to reply to them. She did so, nevertheless, and perhaps rather too forcefully. Must it be confessed? Alas! yes. To disguise Justine's faults would be to deceive the confidence of the reader, and to be ungrateful for the interest that her misfortunes have up till now evoked.

However unworthy Bressac's actions with regard to her may have been, from the first day she had seen him, she had been unable to defend herself against a violent feeling of

affection for him. Gratitude increased in her heart this involuntary desire to which every day new strength was lent by the perpetual encounters with the cherished object: Justine definitely adored this blackguard, despite herself, with the same ardour that she idolised her God, her religion. . . virtue. A thousand times she had reflected to herself upon the cruelty of this man, his antipathy to women, the depravity of his tastes, and the moral gulf that separated them; and nothing in the world could extinguish this budding passion. If Bressac had asked her for her life, had desired her to shed her blood, Justine would have given it, lavished it, and been heartbroken that she could not yet of her own free will make greater sacrifices to the sole object of her passion. Such is love, and that is why the Greeks portrayed him with his eyes bandaged. But Justine said not a word, and the ungrateful Bressac was far from discerning the cause of the tears that she shed daily on his behalf. It was very difficult however, while he was in no doubts about the desire she had to anticipate everything which could please him not to realise that her attentions were strong enough and blind enough to serve even his misdeeds as far as decency would permit, and the care she always took to disguise them from his mother. By this conduct, so natural in a heart stricken with love, Justine had deserved young Bressac's entire confidence, and everything coming from this cherished lover seemed of so great price in Justine's eyes that very often the poor girl imagined that she obtained from love what was, in fact, bestowed upon her from debauchery. . . wickedness, or perhaps more certain still, the need that he thought he had of her for the dreadful projects in his heart.

Who would have believed that he dared to say to her one day 'Among the young people that I debauch, Justine, there are several who only surrender to me out of kindness. Such youths need to look upon the naked charms of a young girl. This necessity offends my pride. I would prefer that the state in which I desire them were due to myself alone. But since it is indispensable to me, I would sooner owe it to you, my angel, than to any other. I would have no doubts about anything:

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you will stay in my dressing-room, and I will take them into my room only when they are in a fit state.'

'Oh, sir,' replied Justine, in tears, 'how can you propose such things to me? And the horrors that you indulge in. . .'

'Ah, Justine,' interrupted Bressac, 'can one ever correct such inclinations!if you could understand what I experience in the sweet illusion. . . . An incredible delusion of the mind—detesting the sex, and wishing to imitate it!carrying to their uttermost extremes this delirium. Ah! No, no, Justine, you do not understand what a pleasure this is to a brain constituted like mine. Such complete delirium.you lose your mind and your sense of reason. There is not a single pleasure of yours which is unknown to us, not one which we cannot enjoy.'

Thus did M. de Bressac express himself in setting out his desires. Justine tried to speak to him of the admirable lady to whom he owed his existence and the grief that such disorders must occasion her. She perceived in this young man nothing but contempt, bad temper, and above all great impatience at seeing the riches, which according to Bressac, ought already to belong to him, in such hands for so long. She saw in him nothing but the most inveterate hatred for this woman, honest and virtuous as she was.

It is true, therefore, that when one has succeeded in transgressing in one's tastes the instinct of this. . . .law, the necessary consequence of this first deviation is a tendency of the most violent kind to precipitate oneself without delay into a thousand others.

Sometimes the ardent Justine employed pious means. Often achieving consolation from them herself, because it is a characteristic of weakness always to find comfort in chimeras, she attempted to communicate their illusions to this pervert's soul. But Bressac, the declared enemy of the mysteries of religion, a persistent castigator of its dogmas, and the extreme antagonist of its inceptor, instead of allowing himself to be convinced by Justine's opinions, soon attempted to subjugate them by his own. He held the young person's mind in sufficient

esteem to desire to cast the light of philosophy upon it; moreover, he had need to destroy all her prejudices. This is how he combatted those of her cult.

(There follows a very detailed attack upon the actions and alleged atrocities of the Old Testament prophets, and upon Christ. Then one day, Bressac, with the aid of Jasmin, Joseph, and an unwilling Justine, assaults and outrages his mother.)

Justine had been in the house for two years, always harrowed by the same sorrows and always consoled by the same hopes, when the infamous Bressac, at last believing himself certain of her, dared to unveil to her his perfidious designs.

They were then in the country, and Justine was alone at her mistress' side, the first woman having obtained leave to spend the summer in Paris on business of her husband's. One evening, shortly after this beautiful girl had retired, Bressac suddenly knocked upon her door, and begged her to let him speak with her for a moment. Alas! every favour that the cruel author of her wrongs accorded her seemed too precious for her to dare refuse. He entered, carefully closed the door, and, throwing himself into a chair beside her, spoke with some embarrassment.

'Listen, Justine, I have matters of the utmost importance to speak to you about: swear to me that you will never reveal any of them.'

'Oh sir, how could you believe me capable of abusing your confidence?'

'You do not know what you would risk if you should ever prove to me that I have been deceived in giving you my trust. . .'

'The most terrible of my sorrows would be to lose it, I have no need of greater threats.'

'My dear,' continued Bressac, grasping Justine's hands, 'this mother whom I detest. . .well, I have condemned her to death. . .and it is you who must aid me. . .'

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'I,' cried Justine, recoiling in horror. "Do not hope. . . Oh, sir, how could you conceive such a project! No, no. Dispose of my life if you must, but never imagine that you can obtain my complicity in this terrible crime that you have conceived.'

'Listen, Justine,' went on Bressac, drawing her gently back to him. 'I am well aware of your repugnance, but since you are intelligent I flattered myself I could conquer it, and prove to you that this crime which appears so enormous to you is at bottom merely a very simple affair.

'Two crimes offer themselves here to your too-unphilosophical eyes, Justine: the destruction of a creature resembling oneself, and the evil with which, according to you, this destruction is increased when this creature belongs so closely to one. With regard to the crime of destroying a fellow man, be quite certain, dear girl, that it is purely illusory. . . .

(Here Bressac outlines de Sade's ideas about Nature and the act of murder, which are given at length in "Francais, encore un effort".

But the creature that I shall destroy is my mother. It is in this respect that we shall examine this murder.

'There can surely be no doubt that the pleasure expected by the mother from the conjugal act is the sole motive which impels her to it. This fact being established, I ask you how gratitude can be born in the heart of the fruit of this selfish act. Did the mother, in abandoning herself to it, work for herself or for her child? I do not think that such a thing can be in any doubt. However, the child is born, the mother suckles it. Is it in this second operation that we are to discover the motive we seek for the sentiment of gratitude? Certainly not. If the mother renders her child this service, do not doubt but that she is only activated by the natural sentiment which impels her to relieve herself of a secretion which otherwise could become dangerous to her. She is imitating the female animals that, like her, the milk would kill, if, like them, she were not immediately relieved of it by this process. Now, can either of them be

relieved of it other than by letting it be sucked by the animal that desires it and that by another natural movement equally reaches for the breast? Here then is the child, born and nourished, without our having discovered in either of these two operations any reason for gratitude towards her who gave him life and maintains it in him. Would you speak to me of the cares that follow those of infancy? Ah, see in them no other motives than those of the mother's pride. In this case unspeaking nature no more demands them from her than she does from other female animals. Beyond the attentions necessary to the child's life and the mother's health, a mechanism no more extraordinary than that of the marriage of the vine to the elm, beyond these attentions, I say, nature decrees nothing more. It is from habit and vanity that women prolong maternal cares; and far from being useful to the child, they weaken his instinct, degrade him, and cause him to lose his power; you would say that he always needs to be led. I ask you now if this child should consider himself bound by gratitude because the mother continues to undertake attentions that he can do without and which only benefit her? What! Should I owe someone something because that person has done for me what I could do excellently well without, and which only the other needs? You will agree that such a mode of thought would be a ghastly extravagance. And so the child has now reached the age of puberty without our having found in him the slightest reason for gratitude towards his mother. What would be the result of his reflections if he then made any? Dare I say it. To him she has transmitted her infirmities, the bad qualities of her blood, her vices, and finally an existence that he has received only in order to be unhappy. Are there any very great motives for gratitude there, I ask you?

'Compare all the other so-called duties of man towards his mother; measure them all by these reflections, and then give your judgment upon your alleged duties towards your father, your wife, your husband, your children, etc. Once you are thoroughly imbued with this philosophy, you will see that you are alone in the universe, that all the chimerical links that

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have been forged for you are the work of men, who, naturally born weak, seek to stay themselves with these bonds. A son believes he has need of his father; the father, in his turn, imagines he has need of his son; that is the cement of these alleged ties, these sacred duties. But I defy any one to find them in nature. So leave your prejudices there, Justine, and serve me: your fortune is made.'

'Oh sir,' replied the poor girl, quite terrified, 'this indifference that you suppose exists in nature is still nothing but the result of your mind's sophistries. Listen instead to your heart, and you will hear it condemn all these false arguments of vice and debauchery. This heart, to whose tribunal I ask you to refer, is it not in fact the sanctuary in which th's nature that you outrage wishes you to listen to and worship her? If she engraves in it the strongest horror for the crime that you meditate, will you grant me that it is to be condemned? I know that at the moment you are blinded by passions; but as soon as their voices are still, to what an extent remorse will make you unhappy; the more active your sensitivity, the more the needle of repentance will torment you. Oh sir, cherish and respect the remaining years of this tender and precious friend. Do not sacrifice her, you will perish of despair. Every day, at every moment, you will see before your eyes this adored mother whom your blind fury has consigned to the tomb. You will hear her beseeching voice whisper again the soft words that were the joy of your childhood. She will appear to you at night, she will torment you in your dreams: with her bleeding hands she will open the wounds with which you have mutilated her. From then onwards not one happy moment will shine for you in this world; all your pleasures will be spoilt, all your thoughts troubled; a heavenly hand, whose power you misprize, will avenge the days you have destroyed by poisoning all your own. And without having enjoyed your hideous crimes you will perish of the mortal regret of daring to accomplish them'.

Justine wept as she spoke these last words; she was on her knees at the feet of this ferocious man who listened to her with an air blended of rage and contempt. She begged him by

all that was most sacred to him to forget an infamous project that she swore to conceal all her life. But she did not know the monster with whom she was dealing. She did not know to what an extent the passions bolster and fortify crime in such a soul as Bressac's. She did not know that all the promptings of virtue and sensibility in such circumstances were like so many needles in the scoundrel's heart, whose sharp pricks invested the projected atrocity with even greater violence. The true libertine loves even the dishonour, the scars, the censures that are the deserts of his execrable action. They are delights to his perverse soul. Have we not seen the man who loves even the tortures that human vengeance prepares for him, who undergoes them joyfully, who regards the scaffold as a throne of glory on which he would be most grieved not to perish with the same courage that had animated him in the loathsome exercise of his sins and outrages? There you see the man in the last degree of considered corruption: there you see Bressac. He stood up, coldly.

'I can see,' he said to Justine, 'that I was deceived; I am more sorry for you than for myself; no matter, I will find other means, and you will have lost much, without your mistress gaining anything'.

Such a threat changed all Justine's ideas. By not accepting the crime proposed to her, she risked a lot on her own account, and her mistress would still inevitably die. By agreeing to take part, she protected herself from Bressac's wrath, and would certainly save the marquis. This reflection which was the work of an instant in her, determined her to accept everything, but as so quick a change of front would inevitably have given rise to suspicion of deceit, she made the most of her pretexts for some time, and put Bressac in the position of frequently repeating his maxims to her. Gradually she gave the impression of not knowing any more what to reply. Bressac believed her converted and threw himself into her arms. What enjoyment for Justine if this movement had been motivated by wisdom! But the time for that had passed; this man's horrible conduct, his parricidal designs, had extinguished every affection

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nourished in this poor girl's weak heart. And now, calmly, she saw in the former idol of her heart only a criminal, unworthy of reigning there for even a single instant.

'You are the first woman I have kissed,' said Bressac, embracing her ardently. 'You are delicious, my child. Has a ray of philosophy penetrated your mind, then? Is it possible that so charming a head could have remained shrouded for so long in terrible prejudices! . . . Oh Justine! the torch of reason is now dispersing the shadows into which superstition had plunged you; you see clearly, you can picture the nullity of crime, and at last the sacred duties of personal interest prevail over the frivolous considerations of virtue: come, you are an angel, I do not know why it is you do not instantly make me change my tastes.'

Bressac in fact, excited much more by the real certainty of his schemes than by Justine's attractions, threw her face down upon the bed. . . . despite her struggles, and said, ' My brave friend, so, you will poison my mother, I can count upon that. Look, here is the subtle poison that you will slip into the infusion of lime blossom that she takes every morning for the sake of her health; it is infallible and has no taste. I have used it hundreds of times'.

'Hundreds of times, sir!'

'Oh yes, Justine. I often use such means, either to rid myself of those who bother me, or merely out of lubricity. I find it delicious in this treacherous way to be master of the lives of others, and I have very often made prescriptions with the sole intent of amusing myself. So you will do it, Justine, yes, you will do it. I will guarantee you against all consequences, and in recompense will give you the deeds of an income of two thousand écus on the very day of the execution.' These promises were signed without any expression of motive. Bressac rang the bell. A pretty catamite appeared.

'What do you want, sir?'

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Meanwhile something most remarkable occurred. . . capable of unveiling the atrocious soul of the monster with

whom we are entertaining our readers, for us not to interrupt for a minute the relation of the venture that they are waiting for, in which his rascality had just involved our heroine.

Two days after the criminal pact of which we have spoken, Bressac learned that an uncle from whose estate he had no expectations had just left him an income of fifty thousand écus.

'Oh Heaven!' exclaimed Justine to herself when she learned the news. 'Is this how the hand of the Supreme Being punishes the plotting of crime?' . . . And repenting presently of this blasphemy against Providence, she cast herself onto her knees, imploring its pardon, and flattered herself that this unexpected event would at least change Bressac's plans. How great was her error!

'Oh my dear Justine,' he cried, running into her room that same evening 'how good fortune showers down upon me! I have often told you this. The idea or the execution of a crime are the surest ways of attaining happiness; there is none left except for criminals'

'Now then, sir,' replied Justine 'This fortune that you did not reckon on. . . the hand that gave it to you. . . yes, sir, madame has told me the whole story: without her your uncle would have disposed of his estate quite differently. You know that he did not love you. It is to your mother alone that you owe this final disposition. She alone persuaded him to sign it . . . and your ingratitude. . .'

'You make me laugh,' interrupted Bressac. 'What does this gratitude that you would impose upon me signify? In truth, there is nothing so amusing. Oh dear, you will never understand, Justine, that nothing is owed to the benefactor, since he has his satisfaction in obliging. So why then must I reward any individual whatsoever for the pleasure that he was pleased to incur for himself? And should I change my plans to give thanks to Mme de Bressac? And should I wait for the rest of my fortune to thank Mme de Bressac for the great service she has done me? Oh Justine, how badly you understand me! You must be told more: this new death is my work; I tried

out upon the brother the poison with which I wish to shorten the days of the sister. . . Dare you demand delays now. . . Oh no, Justine, no, far from making any change, we must make haste, tomorrow or the day after at the latest. I am already longing to pay you a quarter of your income, to put you in possession of the act which assures them to you.'

Justine trembled, but concealed her agitation, and saw that with such a man it was wise to resume her resolve of the previous evening. The way of denunciation still remained to her, but nothing in the world would have shaped Justine to use means that prevent one horror only by committing a second. She decided therefore to warn her mistress. Of all the possible courses that appeared the best. She acted upon it!

'Madame,' she said, the day following her last interview with the young count, 'I have something of the utmost importance to reveal to you. But however much it may interest you, I shall remain silent unless you first give me your word to display no resentment to your son. You may take action, madame, take the best possible steps, but you may say nothing. Please promise me that, or I shall hold my peace'.

Mme de Bressac, who believed it was only a question of some ordinary extravagance in her son, consented to the oath that Justine demanded, and the latter told her everything.

'The monster!' cried the unhappy mother. 'When have I ever done anything that was not for his benefit? Oh Justine, Justine, prove to me the truth of this plot, let me have no room to doubt it. I am in need of all that can succeed in extinguishing in me the sentiments that my blind heart still dares to cherish for this beast.'

And so Justine showed her the packet; it was difficult to establish a better proof. Mme de Bressac who still wished to preserve her illusions, wanted to make tests. A minor dose was administered immediately to a dog which died after two hours of appalling convulsions. Mme de Bressac, no longer able to doubt came to a decision. Ordering Justine to give her the rest of the poison, she wrote at once to M. de Souzeval, her relation, to go secretly to the minister, and unravel to him the atrocity

of a son who was about to make her his victim, to furnish himself with a *lettre de cachet* and as soon as possible to come to the estate and deliver her from the monster who was so cruelly plotting against her life.

But the abominable crime had to be consummated. Yet once more was it necessary, by Heaven's inconceivable permission, for virtue to yield to the efforts of villainy. The animal on whom they had experimented gave everything away. Bressac heard its howls, and demanded to be told what had been done to it. Those whom he questioned knew nothing at all, and gave no positive answer. From that moment his suspicions increased. He said nothing but was anxious. Justine informed the Marquise of his state. She was even more anxious, but nevertheless could only think of speeding up the courier, and concealing even more completely, if it were possible, the object of his mission. She told her son that she was sending to Paris by express coach to beg M. de Souzeval to lay claim to the inheritance of the uncle from whom they had legacies, because there was a fear of court action unless someone appeared at once. She added that she was entreating her relative to come and report to her upon these negotiations, so that she could decide to leave herself, with her son, if the affair required it.

But Bressac, too good a physiognomist not to discern the embarrassment that reigned over his mother's face, and not to observe a little confusion in Justine's, took count of everything and believed nothing. Using hunting as an excuse, he went away from the château and waited for the courier in a place where he must needs pass. This man, more his creature than his mother's, made no difficulties about handing over his despatches; and Bressac, convinced of Justine's treachery, gave the courier a hundred louis with orders never to reappear before his mother. He returned with anger in his heart, and sent all the servants away to Paris, retaining only Jasmin, Joseph and Justine at the chateau. From the fury that was supreme in this blackguard's eyes, our unfortunate orphan soon had an inkling of the disasters that were to overwhelm her and her mistress.

Bressac however lost no time. The gates were closed, everything barred up, and the gamekeepers forbade entry to anyone.

'A terrible crime has just been committed,' said Bressac. 'I must discover its perpetrators. . . You shall know all, my friends, when I have found the guilty one. I am only keeping inside the witness and the person I suspect. . .'

Alas! the atrocious crime had not been committed but the villain was about to accomplish it, he was going to. . . We shiver at the necessity of transmitting these odious facts, but we have promised to be exact, and we must be, even at the expense of our modesty.

'Loathsome creature,' said the young man when he met Justine. 'You have betrayed me; but you will tumble into the very trap you were preparing for me. Why did you promise me the service that I asked from you when your only intention was to deceive me? And how did you imagine you were serving virtue by risking the liberty and perhaps the life of the one to whom you owe your happiness? Placed by necessity between two crimes, why did you choose the more abominable? You should have refused, yes harlot, refused, and not accepted in order to betray me.'

Then Bressac told Justine all that he had done to secure the Marquise's despâches, and how the suspicion had grown which had prompted him to intercept them.

'What have you achieved by your falseness, imbecile creature?' continued Bressac. 'You have risked your own life without saving that of your mistress; for she will die just the same, and before your eyes, and you will follow her. I will convince you, Justine, that the path of virtue is not always the best, and that there are circumstances in this world in which complicity in a crime is preferable to its denouncing.'

From her Bressac flew to his mother.

'Your sentence is decreed, madame,' the monster said to her, 'and you must suffer it. Perhaps you would have done better, knowing my designs and my hatred for you, quite simply to have swallowed the poison. By evading a gentle death you

have prepared for yourself a cruel one. Come, madame, no more delay'.

'Barbarian! Of what do you accuse me?'

'Read your own letter'

'Since you were conspiring against my life, should I not defend myself against you?'

'No! You are nothing but a useless thing on this earth, your life belongs to me, and mine is sacred'

'Oh villain, you are blinded by passion'

'Socrates swallowed the poison that was offered him, without resistance. You were offered some from my side, why did you not take it?'

'Oh my dear son, how can you treat so harshly one who has borne you in her bosom?'

'That service does not exist for me. Follow me, where, follow me, and no more of your arguments'

With these words he seized upon her and dragged her by the hair to a small garden, planted with cypresses and surrounded by high walls, an impenetrable sanctuary in which in the obscurity of a graveyard, reigned the grim silence of death. There Justine was led by Jasmin and Joseph to await tremblingly the fate which was reserved for her.

The first objects that presented themselves to Mme de Bressac's eyes, were on one side a large pit ready to receive her body, and on the other four monstrous mastiffs, foaming with rage, who had been deliberately starved since the discovery of the unhappy secret.

'Take her,' Bressac said to one of the mastiffs. The dog leaped forward and its teeth, buried in the delicate white flesh, at once caused the blood to spurt forth.

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He tied her himself to the trees by means of a rope which encircled her waist leaving her freedom to move her arms, and the possibility of moving backwards or forwards in an area of about six feet.

'An excellent luncheon for my dog! Ah, harlot, it was

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dogs that exposed everything to me, it shall be dogs that will punish you.'

And by the brutal manner in which he handled. . . his mother, it seemed that his murderous hands would dispute in rage with the trenchant teeth of his hounds.

'Come, Jasmin, goad these animals; you, Joseph, b. Justine, we shall have her eaten afterwards. This faithful servant must perish from the same death as her dear mistress. They must be re-united in one and the same tomb. . . You see how deep it is, I had it dug so designedly.'

And Justine, trembling, asking 'for pardon, obtained from her torturers nothing but contempt and outbursts of laughter. The dogs at last surrounded her unfortunate mistress. Goaded by Jasmin, they flung themselves all together upon the defenceless body of the hapless mother, and hungrily devoured her. In vain she repulsed them; in vain she redoubled her efforts to avoid their teeth; each of her movements succeeded only in further exciting them, and the lawn was flooded with streams of blood.

. The cries of our poor orphan mingled dolefully with those of her mistress: little intended for the treatment she was enduring, she needed all Joseph's strength to hold her.

'Come,' said Bressac, 'take back these old hens. We must finish off one, and decide the fate of the other'.

Madame de Bressac was carried back to her room and thrown upon her bed. And her unworthy son, seeing that she was still living, placed a dagger in Justine's hand, seized the arm which held this weapon, and guided it, despite all the unfortunate girl's resistance, into the heart of the unhappy lady, who died imploring God's pardon on her son.

'Do you see the murder you have just committed,' said the barbarous Bressac to the almost unconscious Justine who was soaked in the blood of her mistress. 'Look, can there be, anywhere in the world a more shocking act? You shall be punished for it, you must be; you shall be broken alive on the wheel, you shall be burnt.'

Pushing her into the adjoining room, he locked her in, first placing beside her the bloody dagger. Then he opened up the château, mimicking grief and tears, saying that a fiend had just assassinated his mother, that he had found the weapon in the criminal's room, and held her prisoner, while he quickly demanded every assistance from justice. But this time a protecting God saved innocence. The measure had not been filled, and it was to be with other experiences that Justine must accomplish her destiny. In his confusion, Bressac believed he had firmly locked the door. He had not, and Justine profited from the moment when everyone was centred in the courtyard of the chateau, to leave rapidly, escaping by the gardens to find the gate of the park half open, and thence into the forest.

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The following speech by Rodin is part of one of the arguments he puts forward during his attempts to seduce Justine.

ON THE USELESSNESS OF VIRTUE

Before a week had gone by I again began my efforts to convert Rodin, but he was so hardened against it that nothing I could do was of any avail.

'Do not believe', he replied to my wise words, 'that the sort of homage I have paid to virtue in you proves either that I value virtue or that I intend to prefer it to vice. Do not imagine this, Thérèse, you would be making a great mistake. Anybody who would believe this after what I have done to you and tried to uphold the importance or the necessity of virtue would be completely wrong, and I should be very angry if you believed that I had any thoughts of this kind. The hut which serves to shelter me if the rays of the sun shine too strongly upon me when I am out hunting is certainly not a

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useful building. Its necessity is only due to circumstances. I am exposed to a type of danger, I find something which protects me, I make use of it, but does that mean that this thing is any the less useless? Could it be any the less worthy of regard? In a completely vicious society virtue would be useless. Since our societies today are not entirely vicious one must either simulate virtue or make use of it in order to have less to hear from those who observe it. If nobody was virtuous, virtue would have no use. I am not, therefore, wrong when I maintain that the necessity of virtue is only a matter of opinion or of circumstances. Virtue is not a state of any high value, it is only a way of behaving, which varies according to each climate and which consequently has nothing real about it, for this fact alone makes its futility evident. Only that which is constant can be really good. Anything which changes perpetually cannot aspire to any character of goodness, and that is why immutability has been valued as one of the perfections of God.

'Virtue is entirely without character. There are not two races of men on the surface of the earth who are virtuous in the same way. Therefore virtue is not real and has no intrinsic good. It does not deserve our respect. It must be used as a support, and one must adopt in a politic way the virtue of the country where one lives, so that those who practise virtue out of taste, or who are obliged to do so because of their social position, will leave you in peace. Also, the virtue which is respected where you live can protect you by the preponderance of its convention from all attacks of those who practise vice. But once again, all this is a matter of circumstance and nothing of this can endow virtue with any real merit. Also, some types of virtue are impossible for certain men. Therefore, how can you persuade me that virtue, which opposes or contradicts the passions, can be any part of nature? And if it is not a part of nature how can it be good? It can be certain that amongst the men in question the vices opposed to these virtues will become preferable because they are the only type of existence which best suit their physique and the organs of their bodies. According to this hypothesis, therefore, some vices are very

useful; therefore, if you prove to me that things contrary to virtue can be useful, how can virtue itself be useful? The answer to this usually is that virtue is useful to other people, and that in this sense it is good. For if it is agreed that one should do only whatever benefits other people, I in my turn will only receive what is good. This reasoning is only a sophism; in return for the small amount of good which I receive from others because they practise virtue and thereby oblige me to practise it in turn, I have to make a million sacrifices which do not compensate me in any way. Since I receive less than I give I therefore make a bad deal. I undergo much more harm from the privations that I endure in order to be virtuous than I receive of benefit from virtuous people. This arrangement is not fair and I should not therefore submit myself to it.

'If I were virtuous I am sure of not doing as much good to others as I would receive of harm in forcing myself to be virtuous; would not it therefore be better if I renounced from giving them a pleasure which must cost me so much. There now remains the main that I, being vicious, could do to others, and the evil that I will receive in my turn, if everyone resembles me. If I allow everyone to be completely vicious I agree that there is a certain risk for me, but the unhappiness from what I risk is compensated by the pleasure from what I make others risk. Therefore equality is established, and from then onwards everyone is more or less equally happy. This does not and could not happen in a society where some people are good and others bad, because this mixture produces a perpetual series of snares which do not exist in the other case. In a mixed society all interests are diverse and are therefore the source of an infinite number of misfortunes. In the other type of society all interests are equal, each individual who makes up society has the same tastes, the same inclinations; they all have the same aim and they are all happy.

"But", foolish people will say, "evil cannot make anyone happy". No, when it is agreed that good must be worshipped. But if you despise and degrade anything that you call good you will have only respect for what you had the foolishness

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to call evil. In this way all men will take pleasure in perpetrating it, not because it will be permitted (this would sometimes be a means of reducing its attraction) but in fact because the law will not punish it any longer, while now they inspire fear, reducing thereby the pleasure with which nature has endowed crime. I suppose that in a society where it is agreed that incest (let us admit this crime like any other), that incest, I say, should be a crime, those who practise it will be unhappy because the weight of opinion, law and religion will combine to cool their pleasure. Those who would like to commit this crime and those who dare not because of these restrictions, will also be unhappy. Imagine that in a neighbouring society incest is not a crime: those who do not want to practise it will not be unhappy and those who do want to practise it will be happy. The same thing can be said of all the other acts which are wrongfully considered as crimes. If you look at them from this point of view you create a whole crowd of unfortunate people. If you allow these crimes nobody complains. For those who like to behave in this normal way will do so in peace, and those who do not want to do it either remain indifferent about it and therefore do not suffer, or compensate themselves for the wrong which may have been done to them by a number of other wrongs which they do in their turn to those about whom they may have had to complain.

'Therefore in a criminal society everybody is either very happy or in a state of unconcern, which is not painful. In consequence there is nothing good, nothing respectable, and nothing which can make anyone happy in this state called virtue. Let those who practise it, therefore, be not proud. They need not be grateful for the sort of homage which our type of society forces us to pay to virtue. It is an affair entirely of circumstances and convention. But in fact the whole cult is imaginary and the virtue which is the object of it even for one moment is not any better off for that reason'.

Such was the diabolical logic of Rodin's unfortunate passions.

CONTES et FABLIAUX

LE PRESIDENT MYSTIFIE

MISS HENRIETTA STRALSON

CONTES ET FABLIAUX

From the *Catalogue Raisonné* that de Sade prepared in 1788 it appears that the *Contes et Fabliaux d'un Troubadour Provençal du XVIII^{eme} Siècle* consisted of four volumes of stories. He intended to alternate amusing and tragic themes, but eleven 'heroic and tragic stories' were published in 1800. They were attacked in a pamphlet by one Villetterque who claimed that this 'detestable' work came from a man suspected of having written things even more horrible.

De Sade's reply is typical of the way he usually dealt with his detractors—'From the silly description that Villetterque gives of *Les Crimes de l'Amour* it is clear that he has not read them, if he knew them he would not make me say things which have never occurred to me, he would not single out phrases which have no doubt been dictated to him, in order to give them, by cutting them short in his own way, a meaning which they have never had'. He went on to explain his purpose in writing them: he maintained that the triumph of crime showed the reverse in a good light, and that was enough to prove their usefulness. He wrote a set of notes explaining what happened in each story.

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LE PRÉSIDENT MYSTIFIÉ

The three following stories were published in 1927, edited by Maurice Heine, as *Histoires, Contes et Fabliaux*.

In connection with *Le Président Mystifié* (The Mystified Magistrate), it is interesting to note that among the Aix justices who tried de Sade in 1772 after the affair of the poisoned sweets was a Monsieur de Fontiens, a name which is very close to that of the hero of the story, Monsieur de Fontanis.

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MISS HENRIETTA STRALSON

'Virtue, as in *Clarissa*, succumbs, I agree in *Miss Henrietta Stralson*, but is not crime punished by the very hand of virtue?'

This story is probably the best of *Les Crimes de l'Amour*. Its English setting is certainly a tribute by de Sade to the country whose writers he admired so much.

THE MYSTIFIED MAGISTRATE

It was with heartfelt regret that the Marquis d'Olincourt, colonel of dragoons, and a man full of wit, grace, and spirit, saw his sister-in-law, Mlle de Téroze, consigned to the nuptial embraces to one of the most appalling mortals that have yet trod the face of the earth. This charming girl, eighteen years of age, as fresh as Flora and fashioned like the Graces, had for four years been loved by the young Comte d'Elbène, lieutenant colonel of d'Olincourt's regiment, and she too could not visualise without a shudder the arrival of the fatal moment that by uniting her to the ill-favoured husband appointed for her must separate her for ever from the only man that was worthy of her. But how could she escape? Mlle de Téroze's father was an old man, obstinate, hypochondriac and gouty, who sadly imagined to himself that neither manners nor talents should decide a young girl's affections for a husband, but only reason, maturity, and principally social standing; the position of a man of law was most esteemed, most majestic of all the ranks of monarchy, and moreover that which he loved best in all the world. Consequently it must only be with a man of law that his younger daughter should find happiness. Nevertheless, the old Baron de Téroze had given his elder daughter to a soldier, and what is worse, to a colonel of dragoons. This daughter, extremely happy and born to be happy from every point of view, had no occasion to repent the choice of her father. But all that made no difference. If this first marriage was a success, it was by chance. In actual fact only a man of law could make a girl completely happy. Having established that, it was therefore necessary to find a lawyer. Now, of all the possible lawyers, the most agreeable in the eyes of the old baron was a certain M. de Fontanis, president of the Parliament of Aix, whom he had known earlier in Provence; hence, without any more reflection, it was M. de Fontanis who was going to become the husband of Mlle de Téroze.

The Mystified Magistrate

Very few people can imagine a president of the Parliament of Aix; it is a species of beast that has often been mentioned without much knowledge, uncompromising by profession, p^{er}nickety, credulous, stubborn, vain, cowardly, talkative and stupid by nature, with the thin face of a little bird, the thick harsh voice of a Punch, usually emaciated, tall, scraggy, and stinking like a corpse. You might say that all the spleen and severity of the kingdom's magistracy had taken refuge in the Provençal temple of Themis in order to issue forth from there every time a French court had remonstrances to utter or citizens to hang. But M de Fontanis surpassed even this quick sketch of his compatriots. On top of the gaunt and even somewhat bent figure that we have just pictured, M de Fontanis displayed a narrow occiput, rather low, rising greatly on top, adorned with a yellow forehead, which was covered magisterially with a multi purpose peruke of a type not yet known in Paris. Two somewhat twisted legs supported with adequate ceremony this walking clock tower, from whose chest issued, not without a certain inconvenience to those nearby, a yelping voice, distributing with great emphasis long compliments, half French and half Provençal, at which he never failed to smile himself, with such opening of the mouth that the observer saw therefore right down to the uvula a blackish abyss, denuded of teeth, excoriated in different places and not at all unlike a certain seat that, having regard to the demands of our weak humanity becomes just as frequently the throne of kings as of peasants. Independently of these physical attractions, M de Fontanis had pretensions to a fine mind. After dreaming one night that he was raised with Saint Peter to the third heaven he fancied himself the greatest astronomer in France. He argued over legislation like Farinacius and Cujas, and was often heard to say to great men, and to his colleagues who were by no means great men that a citizen's life, fortune, honour, family, everything in fact that society regards as sacred was nothing as soon as there was any question of exposing a crime, and that it was a hundred times preferable to risk the life of fifteen innocents than to save by misfortune one guilty

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person, because heaven is just if Parlements are not, and the punishment of an innocent person entails only the inconvenience of dispatching a soul to Paradise, whereas the saving of a guilty man risks the multiplication of crimes in this world. Only one class of individuals had any rights upon the armour-plated soul of M. de Fontanis—prostitutes. Not that he made a great use of them in general. Although most ardent, his ability was uncontrolled and moderate in execution, and his desires extended far beyond his powers. M. de Fontanis had in mind the glory of transmitting his illustrious name to posterity, that is all, but what caused this celebrated magistrate to show indulgence to the priestesses of Venus, was his claim that there were few citizens more useful to the State, that by means of their knavery, their deceit and their gossip a multitude of secret crimes managed to be uncovered, and M. de Fontanis had this to his credit that he was the sworn enemy of what philosophers call human weaknesses.

This somewhat grotesque combination of Ostrogoth physique and Justinian morality left the town of Aix for the first time in April 1779 at the request of M. le Baron de Téroze whom he had known for a long time for reasons of little importance to the reader, and came to stay at the Hotel de Danemark, not far from the baron's residence. As it was then the time of the Saint-Germain fair, everyone in the hôtel thought that this extraordinary creature had come to go on show. One of those officious creatures who are always offering their services in such public establishments, even proposed to him that he would go and warn Nicolet who would esteem it a veritable pleasure to prepare a place for him, unless however he would prefer to set himself up at Audinot's. The president replied,* 'My nurse certainly warned me when I was small that Parisians are a caustic, facetious people who would never do justice to my virtues, but my wig-maker nevertheless informed me that my head of hair would impress them. Good folk, you joke as you die of hunger, you sing while you are being

* The reader is warned that he must provençalise and broaden the part of the president throughout, although the text does not indicate it.

crushed. . . Oh! I have always said so, these people need an inquisition as in Madrid, or an ever-ready scaffold as in Aix'.

M. de Fontanis, however, after a little attention to his toilet which could only achieve some heightening of the brilliance of his sexagenarian charms, after several applications of rosewater and lavender, which were not, as Horace said, ambitious ornaments, after all that, I say, and perhaps some other precautions which have not come to our knowledge, the president went to present himself to his old friend the baron. The double doors were opened, his name was announced and the president entered. Unfortunately for him, the two sisters and the Comtesse d'Olimcourt were amusing themselves like three little children in one corner of the salon, when this original figure made its appearance, and however hard they tried they could not possibly restrain themselves from bursting into laughter which put the grave visage of the Provençal magistrate completely out of joint. He had studied his entrance bow for a long while before a mirror, and was giving a passable rendering of it when this damnable laughter escaped from our young friends and almost caused the president to retain his bow much longer than he had intended. He straightened up however, a stern glance from the baron brought his three children back within the margins of respect, and the conversation began.

The baron who intended to go straight to the point and whose mind was already made up did not allow this first interview to end without informing Mlle de Téroze that this was the husband he had destined for her and that she had to give him her hand within eight days at the latest. Mlle de Téroze said not a word, the president withdrew, and the baron repeated that he wished to be obeyed. It was a cruel situation for her to be in. Not only did this beautiful girl adore M. d'Elbène, not only was she idolised by him, but, as weak as she was sensitive, she had already allowed her delectable lover to pluck that flower which, so different from the rose to which it is nevertheless sometimes compared, has not the same faculty of being reborn each spring. Now, what would M. de Fontanis have thought. . . a president of the Parliament of Aix. . . on

finding his duty already accomplished? A Provençal magistrate may very well be ridiculous—that is likely among this class of persons—but he is still able to judge of the first fruits, and would comfortably expect to find them at least once in his life in his own wife. It was this which halted Mlle de Féroze, who, although full of life and gaiety, possessed nevertheless all the delicacy which befits a woman in such a case, and fully realised that her husband would think very little of her if she ever proved that she could have been lacking in respect for him even before they met. For there is nothing so just as our prejudices in these matters. Not only must an unfortunate girl sacrifice all her heart's affections to the husband that her parents give her but she is even to be blamed if before knowing the tyrant who will enslave her she has only listened to the voice of Nature and yielded for one moment to her promptings. Mlle de Féroze confided her woes to her sister. The latter, whose sense of humour was greater than her prudishness, and who was much more likeable than she was religious, roared with laughter like a madwoman at the confidence, and immediately shared it with her serious husband who decided that matters being in such a shattered and ruined state, they must not on any account be offered to the priests of Themis, which gentlemen never joked about matters of such importance; his poor little sister would no sooner be in the town of *the ever-prepared scaffold* than she might find herself climbing it to provide a victim to chastity. The marquis quoted proofs—after his dinner especially he sometimes showed himself most erudite—that Provence was an Egyptian colony, that the Egyptians very frequently sacrificed young girls, and that a president of the Parlement of Aix, who fundamentally was nothing but an Egyptian colonist, could without achieving any miracle divorce his little sister from the prettiest neck in the world. . . Mere choppers-off of heads, these colonial presidents, continued d'Olincourt, they will chop through necks as crows will pick off walnuts, without looking closely enough to see whether justly or not. Like Themis, severity wears a bandage placed

over its eyes by stupidity, and in the town of Aix never raised by philosophy.

They agreed to have a meeting about it. The count, the marquis, Madame d'Olincourt and her charming sister went to dinner at a little house owned by the marquis in the Bois de Bologne, where the stern areopagus decided in an enigmatic style, similar to the answers of the Cumean Sybil, or the decrees of the Parliament of Aix, which by virtue of its Egyptian nativity has certain rights to the hieroglyph, that the president *would wed* and *would not wed*. The sentence pronounced and the actors well rehearsed, the young girl, on returning to her father, offered him no opposition. D'Olincourt and his wife declared that they would celebrate so well matched a union. They flattered the president remarkably, taking good care not to laugh again when he appeared, and so won the hearts of the son-in-law and the father, that they got them both to agree that the rites of hymen should be performed only at the Château d'Olincourt near Melun, a magnificent estate belonging to the marquis. Everyone approved, and the baron said that he alone was desolated at not being able to join in the pleasures of so agreeable a celebration, but that he would come if he could. At last the day arrived, the two principals were united with the sacraments at St-Sulpice, very early in the morning, and left the same day for d'Olincourt. The count d'Elbène, disguised in name and appearance as La Brie, personal footman to the marquise, received the company when they arrived, and after supper, led the couple to the nuptial chamber, the decorations and machinery of which had been managed by him, and their operation left to his responsibility.

'In truth, my pretty one,' said the amorous Provençal, as soon as he found himself alone with his future wife, 'you have all the charms of Venus herself. *Caspita!** I don't know where you acquired them, but one could scour all Provence without finding their equal'.

Then, caressing the poor little Téroze, through her clothes, who did not know whether she was amused or afraid,

* A Provençal oath.

he continued, '*Tout aque par ici et tout aque par là*, may God damn me, and may I never judge another prostitute, if these aren't the shapes of love beneath the glittering petticoats of her mother'.

However at this moment La Brie entered, bearing two golden cups, one of which he presented to the young bride, the other to the President.

'Drink, virtuous couple,' he said, 'and may you find, both of you, the gifts of love and the rewards of marriage in this drink. Sir President', went on La Brie, seeing the magistrate question the reason for the drink, 'this is a Parisian custom dating back to the baptism of Clovis. It is a habit of ours that before the celebration of the mysteries which will soon require both your attention you take from this potion, purified by the bishop's benediction, the powers necessary for the enterprise'.

'Of course, only too willingly,' said the man of justice. 'Give it to me, my friend, give it to me. . .but, *ceñdix*, if you intend to fan my passions, let your young mistress look out for herself, I'm only too eager already, and if you force me to the point where I no longer know myself, I don't know what will happen.'

The president drank, his young bride followed suit, the servants withdrew, and the couple went to bed. But they had hardly got between the sheets when the president was seized by such acute pains in his inside and so urgent a need to relieve his frail nature in a fashion the reverse of what should be, that without respect for where he was and without regard for her who shared his couch, he flooded the bed and all around it with such a considerable deluge of bile that in her panic Mlle de Téroze had only just time to throw herself out and call for help. People hurried in, M. and Madame d'Olincourt, who had taken good care not to go to bed, arrived in a rush, the astonished president flung the clothes around him in order not to expose himself, without reflecting that the more he hid himself the more soiled he became. In the end he was such a horrible and disgusting sight that his bride and everybody

present left him with vigorous condolences upon his condition and with the assurance that the baron would be informed at once in order that he might immediately send one of the best doctors in the capital to the château.

'Merciful Heaven!' exclaimed the poor bewildered president as soon as he was alone, 'this is a fine adventure! I thought that it was only in our Palace and on the fleurs de lis that we could overflow in this fashion, but on the first night of marriage, in the wench's bed, truly I cannot understand that'.

A lieutenant of d'Olincourt's regiment called Delgatz, who had attended two or three courses at the veterinary school for the sake of the regiment's horses, arrived the next morning without fail, heralded as one of the most famous sons of Aesculapius. M. de Fontanis had been advised to dress only very informally, and Madame la Présidente de Fontanis, on whom however we ought not yet to bestow that title, did not conceal from her husband how interesting she found him in such a costume. He wore a dressing-gown of yellow calamaneo with red stripes down to the waist, adorned with facings and lapels, and beneath that a little waistcoat of brown muslin, with sailor's breeches of the same colour, and on top a red woollen nightcap. The effect was heightened by an interesting pallor from the night before and inspired such an overwhelming access of love in Mlle de Téroze that she would not leave his side for a quarter of an hour.

'*Péchaire!*' exclaimed the president. 'How she loves me. She is indeed the very woman heaven has destined for my happiness. My behaviour last night was very bad, but we don't have colic every day.'

However, the doctor had arrived. Taking his patient's pulse and showing surprise at his weakness, he proved by means of aphorisms from Hippocrates and the Commentaries of Galen that unless he restored himself that evening at supper with half a dozen bottles of Spanish and Madeira wine, it would be quite impossible for him to achieve success with the proposed defloration. Regarding yesterday's indigestion, that was nothing. 'The origin of that, sir,' he told him, 'was that the bile had

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not been properly filtered in the liver ducts'.

'But,' said the marquis, 'it was not a dangerous accident'.

'I crave your pardon, sir,' replied the disciple of the temple of Epidauris, 'in medicine we do not find any little causes which cannot become important unless we immediately suspend their effects by the profundity of our science. From this minor upset a considerable alteration in monsieur's organism could arise. This unfiltered bile, carried by the stem of the aorta into the sub-clavicle artery, transported then from there into the delicate membranes of the brain by the carotids, by altering the circulation of animal spirits and suspending their natural activity could have produced madness'.

'Heavens above,' cried Mlle de Téroze in tears, 'my husband mad, oh sister! my husband mad!'

'Calm yourself, madame, it is nothing, thanks to the promptness of my attentions, and now I make myself responsible for the invalid.'

With these words joy was seen to spring again in the heart of everyone: the Marquis d'Olincourt embraced his brother-in-law tenderly and in a lively provincial manner demonstrated to him the extreme interest he took in him, and there was nothing but happiness everywhere. That day the marquis received his vassals and his neighbours. The president wished to dress for the occasion but was prevented from doing so and everyone took pleasure in presenting him in his get-up to all the society of the neighbourhood.

'But he is so charming like that,' said the wicked marquise at every opportunity. 'To tell the truth, M. d'Olincourt, if before I had met you I had known that the sovereign magistracy of Aix included such agreeable gentlemen as my dear brother-in-law, I must confess I would never have taken any husband who was not a member of this admirable assembly.'

The president thanked her, bowing low and grinning to himself, simpering before a mirror on several occasions and muttering to himself '*There's no doubt about it, I'm not bad*'. At last supper time arrived. The damnable doctor was in attendance, and as he himself was drinking like a lord he had little

difficulty in persuading his patient to follow his example. Care had been taken to set some very intoxicating wines within their reach, which rapidly caused such confusion in their brain-cells that the president was soon in the state intended for him. On leaving the table, the lieutenant, who had played his part magnificently, gained his bed and disappeared the following day. As for our hero, his dear wife took charge of him, and led him to the nuptial bed. The whole company formed a triumphant escort for them, and the marquise, as charming as ever, but much more so since she had indulged somewhat in champagne, assured the president that he had had too much, and that she feared that stimulated by the fumes of Bacchus he would still not become love's prisoner that night.

'That's no trouble, Madame la Marquise,' replied the president, 'when these seductive gods combine they only become more redoubtable. As for reason, that can disappear in wine or the flames of love, and as soon as we can dispense with it, what does it matter to which of the two divinities we have sacrificed it. As for us, magistrates of a different order, we know that the one thing in the world we can best do without is reason. It is banned from our tribunals as it is from our brains, and we make a game of trampling it underfoot. That's what makes our decrees such masterpieces, for although good sense plays no part in them, they are executed just as sternly as if anyone understood what they meant. As you see me now, Madame la Marquise', continued the president, tottering slightly, and picking up his red bonnet that in a momentary loss of equilibrium had parted company with his denuded skull, 'yes, truly, as you see me now, I'm one of the best heads in my troop. It was I, a year ago, who persuaded my spiritual colleagues to exile from the province for ten years, and thereby ruin for ever, a gentleman who had always served his king faithfully, and all over a gang of women. There was some opposition, but I gave my opinion, and the whole flock rallied to my voice. . . Heavens, I love morals, you see, I love temperance and sobriety, anything which offends against those two virtues disgusts me, and I come down hard upon it. You

must be severe, severity is the daughter of justice. . .and justice is the mother of. . .please forgive me, madame, there are moments when my memory leads me a little astray. . .'

'Yes, indeed, how right,' replied the crazy marquise, as she was leaving, taking the whole party with her, 'only do watch that this evening everything does not go astray with you like your memory, for we must make an end of it at last, and my little sister who worships you cannot dispose herself to live in such abstinence for ever'.

'Have no fear, madame, have no fear,' went on the president, attempting to accompany the marquise out with rather unsteady steps, 'there's nothing to be afraid of, I assure you. I'll make her Madame de Fontanis for you by tomorrow as sure as I am a man of honour. Isn't it true, my dear', continued the lawyer as he returned to his companion, 'don't you agree with me that tonight will see our task accomplished. . .See how everyone desires it, there's not one individual in your entire family who does not consider himself honoured by being allied to me. There's nothing so flattering in a household as a magistrate'.

'Who can doubt it, sir,' replied the young woman. 'I assure you that on my side, I have never felt so proud as now, hearing myself called *Madame la Présidente*.'

'I have no difficulty in believing that. Now, get undressed, my treasure, I feel a little heavy, and I'd like, if possible, to achieve our operation before sleep carries me off completely.'

Mlle de Téroze, however, as is the custom with young brides, was so incapable of finishing her preparations, never finding what she needed, scolding her women, and never getting to the end, that the president, who could no longer stand, decided to get into bed, where for a quarter of an hour he contented himself with calling out 'But come on, then, damn it, come on, I can't imagine what you are doing, if you don't come soon there won't be time'. Nothing happened, however, and since in the state of drunkenness of our modern Lyncurgus, it was difficult enough to find his head on a pillow without falling asleep, he yielded to the most pressing of his needs,

and was already snoring as if he had just sentenced some whore from Marseilles, before Mlle de Téroze had even changed her chemise.

'That's settled him,' said the Comte d'Elbène as soon as he tiptoed into the room. 'Come, dear heart, and grant me those moments of happiness that this gross beast would like to steal from us.'

With these words he led away the subject of his adoration. The lights were extinguished in the bridal chamber, the floor was covered at once with mattresses, and at a given signal the part of the bed occupied by our lawyer was separated from the rest and raised up by means of a few pulleys to a height of twenty feet above the ground, without our legislator, thanks to his soporific condition, noticing anything. At about three o'clock in the morning, however, he was woken by a certain fullness in his bladder, and remembering that he had seen a table near him that contained the vessel so essential to his comfort, he groped for it. Surprised at first to find nothing but empty space about him, he edged forward, but the bed, which was only held up by ropes, conformed to the movement of its occupant who was leaning forward, and ended up by yielding so far to it that it turned completely over and vomitted its load into the middle of the room. The president fell onto the mattresses prepared for him, and his astonishment was so great that he began to bellow like a calf being led to the slaughter.

'What the devil's this!' he cried. 'Madame, madame, you must be there, well then, how do you explain this fall? I lie down yesterday four feet above the ground, and now when I want my chamber pot I fall from more than twenty feet up.'

But as nobody replied to these loving complaints, the president who in point of fact found himself not uncomfortably bedded renounced his enquiries and finished the night there as if in his miserable pallet in Aix. After his descent, the bed had been carefully and gently lowered until it corresponded with the part from which it had been separated, no longer appearing to be anything but one single, even, couch. At nine in the morning Mlle de Téroze quietly entered the

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room again; she was hardly inside before she opened all the windows and rang for her women.

'To be honest, sir,' she said to the president, 'your company is not agreeable, you must admit, and I shall very certainly complain to my family of your behaviour towards me'.

'What's all this,' said the now sober president, rubbing his eyes, and not at all understanding the accident which left him lying on the floor.

'What indeed! This is what it is,' said the bride, enjoying her husband's mood, 'last night when I, impelled by the affections which should bind me to you, moved closer to you to receive assurance of the same sentiments on your part, you furiously pushed me away and threw me onto the floor. . .'

'Oh, merciful heavens!' said the president, 'listen, my little one, I am beginning to understand something of the incident. . . I offer you my sincerest apologies. . . last night, suffering from a rather urgent need, I was trying every way of satisfying it, and in my necessary movements which threw me out of bed myself, I must obviously have knocked you out also. I am even more to blame because I was undoubtedly dreaming, since I thought I had fallen more than twenty feet. But come, my angel, it is nothing, nothing at all, we must put off the fun until tonight, and I guarantee you I will look after myself. I shall drink nothing but water. But at least give me a kiss, little heart, let us make it up before we appear in public, or else I will believe you bear me resentment, and I wouldn't have that for worlds'.

Mlle de Téroze willingly offered one of her rosy cheeks, still glowing with the ardour of love, to the obscene kisses of this old satyr. People came in and the husband and wife carefully concealed the unfortunate nocturnal catastrophe.

The whole day was spent pleasantly and chiefly in going for a walk, which, by taking M. de Fontanis away from the chateau gave La Brie time to prepare new settings. The president, firmly resolved to consummate his marriage, was so careful during meals that it was impossible to make use of those methods to derange his reason, but luckily there was more

than one trap to operate, and there were too many enemies conspiring against the notable M. de Fontanis for him to escape from their snares. Everyone went to bed.

'Oh! tonight, my angel,' said the president to his young spouse, 'I flatter myself you won't be able to escape'. Having no wish to appear in anything but good order the poor Provençal was. . . . stretching himself, screwing up every single nerve, which caused him to press upon his couch two or three times more energetically than if he were lying still, and finally snapping the already prepared beams in the floor below and precipitating the unfortunate magistrate into a pigsty situated immediately under the room. For a long time it was a subject for discussion with the company at the Chateau d'Olincourt as to which must have been the more surprised, the president on thus finding himself in the midst of animals so common in the place of his birth, or the animals on seeing amongst them one of the most celebrated magistrates of the Parliament of Aix. Several people claimed that satisfaction must have been equal on both sides. After all, the president should have been above himself to find himself so to speak, in society, and to breathe for a moment air that smacked of the soil, and on their side the animals, impure and forbidden by the good Moses as they were, ought to have offered thanks to Heaven when they discovered at last a legislator at their head, and a legislator of the Parliament of Aix, who had been accustomed since childhood to judge causes relative to the favourite element of these worthy beasts and would be able in the future to arrange and anticipate all discussions bearing on this element so analogous to the organisers of both parties.

However that may be, as recognition was not immediate, and civilisation, the mother of politeness, is hardly more advanced among the members of the Parliament of Aix than among the animals despised by the Israelites, there was at first a sort of shock, during which the president won no laurels. He was knocked about, bruised, and harassed by importunate snouts. He uttered remonstrances and no one listened to him; he promised to register the deed, no response; he spoke of

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decrees, and nobody was any more moved; he threatened exile, and was trampled under foot, and the unfortunate Fontanis, covered with blood, was already preparing a sentence involving nothing less than the stake, when help at last arrived.

It was La Brie and the colonel, armed with torches, who came to attempt the extrication of the magistrate from the slime which engulfed him. The question, however, arose of knowing how to get hold of him, and as he was well and truly covered from head to foot, it was neither easy nor very fragrant to lay hands upon him. La Brie went to find a pitchfork, a hastily summoned groom brought along another, and in this fashion our man was to the best of their ability prised out of the nauseous cesspit in which he had been buried by his fall. But where to take him now was the next difficulty, and one that it was not easy to resolve. There was talk of purging the decree, of the necessity for purifying the guilty, and the colonel proposed letters of abolition, but the groom who understood not one word of this fine talk said that quite simply he must be deposited for a couple of hours in the water trough, and after that he would be sufficiently soaked for them to complete making him a pretty picture again with handfuls of straw. But the marquis asserted that the coldness of the water would affect his brother-in-law's health and with that, La Brie learning that the kitchenboy's scullery was still equipped with hot water, the president was transported there and confided to the care of this pupil of Comus who in no time at all rendered him as clean as a china bowl.

'I would not propose that you return to your wife,' said d'Olincourt when he saw the freshly scrubbed lawyer. 'I know your scruples, and so La Brie will take you to a small dressing-room where you may spend the rest of the night in peace.'

'Good, good, my dear marquis,' said the president. 'I approve of your idea. . .but you will agree, I must be bewitched for such adventures to befall me every night since I've been in this damned château.'

'There is some physical cause behind this,' replied the

marquis. 'The doctor is coming back to see us tomorrow, I advise you to consult him.'

'I want to,' answered the president, and when he reached his little room, he said to La Brie as he got into bed, "To tell the truth, my friend, I've never been so close to my goal'.

'Alas, sir,' the clever youth replied as he left the room, 'there's some act of God in all this and I assure you I pity you with all my heart'.

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(The following day the president was treated by the bogus doctor and placed under an austere regime of abstinence, dieting and purging. On the twelfth day of such treatment, he was restored to his wife as being fit enough to resume his conjugal duties.)

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Supper was a gay affair, the marquise showed herself most agreeable and mischievous, wagering against her husband in favour of her brother in law's success, and everyone retired. Then toilets were hastily accomplished and Mlle de Téroze begged her husband from modesty not to allow any light in her room. Too chastened to refuse anything, he granted everything she requested and they went to bed. There were no obstacles any more, and the intrepid president finally plucked, or thought he plucked, the flower. He was crowned with love, and when day came the windows were opened and the rays of the sun that were able to penetrate the room revealed at last to the eyes of the conqueror she whom he had sacrificed. . . Merciful heaven, what became of him when he saw an old negress in place of his wife, when he saw a face as black as it was hideous substituted for the delicate charms that he believed were his! He flung himself back, crying out that he was bewitched, when his wife arrived in person, surprising him with this divinity from Tenara, and asked him bitterly what she could have done to him to be so cruelly deceived.

'But, madame, wasn't I with you yesterday. . . ?'

'Shamed and humiliated though I am, sir, I have no reason at all to reproach myself for lacking in obedience to you. You

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saw this woman beside me, and brutally you pushed me away in order to seize her. You made her occupy the place in the bed that was destined for me, and I left you in confusion, with only my tears to comfort me.'

'And tell me, my angel, are you quite certain of all the facts that you are alleging?'

'Monster! You want to insult me further after such a violent outrage. Are sarcasms to be my reward when I expected consolation. . . Hasten, hasten, my sister, bring all my family here to see to what an unworthy object I have been sacrificed . . . there she is, there she is, this loathsome rival of mine,' cried the young bride, frustrated of her rights and shedding a cascade of tears, 'he even dares to hold her in his arms before my very eyes. Oh friends', continued Mlle de Téroze in despair, gathering everyone around her, 'help me, lend me some weapons against this perjurer. Was this what I have waited for, adoring him as I did. . .'

Nothing could have been more amusing than the face of de Fontanis when he heard these surprising words. At times he cast bewildered glances at his negress, then turning next to his young wife, he considered her with a kind of imbecilic concentration, which might really have become most disturbing to the disposition of his mind. By a most singular chance, ever since the president had been at d'Olincourt's, La Brie, his disguised rival whom he should most have feared, had become the one person among everybody present in whom he had most confidence. He called him.

'My friend,' he said to him, 'you have always seemed to be a very reasonable lad, will you be kind enough to tell me if you have really noticed any change in my brain?'

'My word, monsieur le president,' replied La Brie, sadly and with some confusion, 'I would never have dared to tell you, but since you do me the honour of asking my opinion I cannot hide from you the fact that since your fall into the pigsty the ideas that have come from your cerebral membranes have never been quite normal. But don't worry about it, sir, the doctor who has already treated you is one of the greatest

men we have ever had in this region Listen, we had here the judge for M le marquis' district, and he became so mad, that there was not a single young libertine in the district who could have some fun with a girl without this idiot charging him with a criminal action, and a decree, and a sentence, and exile, and all the platitudes that are always on the lips of these good for nothings Well, sir, our doctor, this world famous fellow who has already had the honour of treating you with eighteen blood lettings and thirty two medicines, made him as sane in the head as if he had never judged anybody in all his life But look, continued La Brie, turning in the direction of the noise he had heard 'it's a true saying that you speak of the Devil and he comes -if this isn't the very man himself coming here!'

'Ah, good morning, dear doctor, said the marquis seeing Delgatz arrive 'I truly believe that we have never needed your ministrations so much Our dear friend the president suffered a slight mental disturbance yesterday evening which made him, despite everybody, sleep with this negress here instead of his wife'

'Despite everybody, said the president, 'was there really some opposition?'

'I opposed it first with all my might,' replied La Brie, 'but you were going at it so vigorously, sir, that I preferred to let it be, rather than chance being maltreated by you'

At this the president scratched his head and was beginning to have no idea of what to believe when the doctor approached and took his pulse

'This is more serious than the last accident, said Delgatz lowering his eyes. . .

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(*The consultation continues and develops into a discussion between the president and the marquis on the injustice and uselessness of capital punishment, using similar arguments to those in 'Français, encore un effort' from 'La Philosophie dans le Boudoir' The president's madness is treated with ice cold baths, and he is afterwards taken with the rest of the company on a visit to a friend of the marquis During the crossing of a*

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river by ferry the poor president is tricked into doing acrobatics to demonstrate his youthful agility and is made to fall into the water. When they arrive at last at the friend's house an enormous feast awaits them.)

. . . care was taken to make the president swallow a *crème aux pistaches*. He had no sooner got this in his entrails when he was obliged to ask immediately for the privy. He was shown into one that was very dark. Horribly pressed, he sat down, and relieved himself eagerly, but when the operation was finished the president was unable to stand up.

'Now what's all this,' he cried, fumbling behind him. But it was no use; except by leaving his back behind, it was impossible to escape. His absence, however, caused a certain sensation, enquiries were made as to where he could be, and at last, led on by the cries they heard, the whole company assembled before the fatal privy.

'What the devil are you doing in there so long, my friend,' said d'Olincourt, 'are you afflicted with the colic, then?'

'Death and damnation!' said the poor devil, redoubling his efforts to get up, 'can't you see that I'm trapped. . .'

But to make a more pleasing spectacle for the party, and to increase the president's efforts to rise from his accursed seat, a small spirit lamp was passed underneath him onto his buttocks, which by sizzling the hair and sometimes pricking him quite considerably caused him to make the most extraordinary leaps and pull the most horrible faces. The louder the laughter around him, the angrier the president became. He cursed the women and threatened the men, and the more he thundered the more comic was the sight of his heated face. In the course of his shakes, his perrique became detached from his skull and his uncovered cranium conformed more amusingly still to the contortions of his facial muscles. At last the host arrived, full of apologies to the president because he had not been warned that the privy was in no state to receive him. He and his servants unstuck their unfortunate patient to the best of their ability but not without causing him to lose a circular

strip of skin which despite everything remained attached to the ring of the seat that the painters had dipped in strong glue in order to make it take next the colouring with which it was planned to decorate it

'Really,' said Fontanis, reappearing unabashed, 'you are very lucky to have me, and I am a good foil for your amusement'

'That is unjust, my friend, replied d'Olincourt 'Why must you always attribute to us the disasters that fortune sends you I thought it was enough to have the halter of Themis for equity to become a natural virtue, but I can see that I am mistaken'

'Because your ideas on what we call equity are not clear,' said the president 'At the bar we acknowledge several kinds of equity, for instance, what is called relative equity, and personal equity

'Gently now,' said the marquis, 'I have never noticed that the virtue which is analysed so much is ever practised to any extent What I myself call equity, my friend, is quite simply the law of nature Integrity always follows its observance, and injustice only appears when you depart from it Tell me, president, if you had indulged in some fanciful caprice inside your own home, would you consider it very equitable if a band of numbskulls, carrying their flaming torches into the very bosom of your family, ferreting out by means of deceitful enquiries, treacheries, and hired denunciations some irregularities pardonable at thirty years of age, profited from these atrocities to ruin you, banish you, stain your honour, dishonour your children, and ravage your possessions? Tell me, my friend, what do you think, do you consider these scoundrels very equitable? If it is true that you admit a Supreme Being, would you worship this model of justice if he employed it against men in this way, and would you not be terrified of being subject to him?'

'What do you mean by this, please? What! Are you blaming us for seeking out crime it is our duty'

'That is false, your duty only consists in punishing it when it reveals itself Leave the inspired, barbarous task of

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seeking it out like vile spies and infamous informers to the stupid and violent maxims of the inquisition. What citizen will feel safe surrounded by servants paid by your attentions, his honour and his life resting at every minute in the hands of gentry who, only embittered by the chain they wear, believe they can escape from it or lighten it by selling to you the man who imposes it on them? You will have multiplied the number of rascals in the State, made women traitors, servants slanderers and children ingrates. You will have doubled the total of vices, and not given birth to a single virtue.'

'There is no question of giving birth to virtues, only of destroying crime.'

'But your methods increase it.'

'Very well, then, but that's the law, we must obey it. We are not legislators, my dear marquis, my colleagues and I, we are executives.'

'Say rather, president, say rather,' said d'Olincourt, who was beginning to get excited, 'that you are *executors, unworthy executioners*, who, being naturally enemies of the State, only delight in opposing yourself to its prosperity, in placing obstacles in the way of its happiness, in tarnishing its glory and in shedding without reason the precious blood of its subjects'.

Despite the two cold baths Fontanis had taken during the day, bile is a substance so difficult to destroy in a man of law that the poor president was quivering with rage to hear such disparagement of a profession he considered so worthy of respect. He could not imagine that what is called the magistracy could be in the position to be chastised in this fashion, and was perhaps on the point of replying in the language of a sailor from Marseilles when the ladies approached and suggested they went back. The marquise asked the president whether any new necessity did not call him to the privy.

'No, no, madame,' said the marquis, 'this worthy magistrate does not always have colic, you must excuse him if he regarded the attack somewhat seriously. It is an illness of some importance in Marseilles or Aix, this little motion of the

bowels. Having already seen a gang of wretches, colleagues of our brave friend here, decree that some whores who had colic were *poisoned*, you must not be surprised if colic is a serious matter to a magistrate of Provence'.

Fontanis, one of the most severe of the judges in this affair which has covered the Provençal magistracy with shame for ever, was in a state which it is difficult to describe, stammering and stuttering, stamping his feet, frothing at the mouth, resembling the mastiffs in a bull-fight when they are unable to succeed in biting their adversary, and d'Olincourt grasped his opportunity.

'Look at ~~han~~, ladies, look, and tell me, please, if you would consider the fate of an unfortunate gentleman very pleasant who, confident in his innocence and good faith, saw fifteen hounds like this one here yapping at the seat of his trousers.'

The president was about to lose his temper completely, but the marquis, who did not want a scandal yet, very prudently made for his coach, and left Mlle de Téroze to apply balm to the wounds that he had opened.

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(The cold baths and the doctor's regime of abstinence went on for a fortnight, by which time the president was again in a fit state to lay claim to his wife. The next plan was to send him off to deal with malicious ghosts that were terrifying the château de Téroze, his wife's dowry. Despite all his protestations and fears, he departs, an incongruous figure in an old suit of armour, together with d'Olincourt. On arrival at the château, they learn that it is haunted by a man who was unjustly executed and has sworn to revenge himself by wringing the neck of a magistrate—but only a dishonest magistrate. The president tries to leave but is prevented, and after supper begins his vigil in the room where the ghosts are said to appear first. While he waits he justifies both his own actions and the legal system to himself.)

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The president was reasoning in this manner when a terrible noise was heard in all the rooms and in all the corridors of the

château at the same time. His whole body was seized with shudders, he clung tightly onto his chair and hardly dared look up.

'Fool that I am,' he cried, 'is it for me, for a member of the Parliament of Aix, to fight against spirits? Oh spirits! What has there ever been in common between the Parliament of Aix and you?'

The noise, however, redoubled, the doors of the two towers were forced, and terrifying creatures came into the room. . . Fontanis threw himself onto his knees, implored forgiveness, and begged for his life.

'Villain,' said one of the phantoms to him in a terrifying voice. 'Did your heart know any pity when you unjustly condemned so many unfortunates, were you ever moved by their dreadful fate, were you any less vain, arrogant, greedy, licentious, on the day when your unjust decrees plunged into misfortune or the tomb the victims of your imbecile severity? What in you gave birth to that dangerous impurity of your momentary power that public opinion secures for one instant, and philosophy immediately destroys? Suffer us to act on the same principles, and since you are the weaker, submit.'

At these words four of these physical spirits forcibly seized hold of Fontanis, and in no time stripped him clean as a whistle, without drawing anything from him but tears, cries, and a fetid perspiration which covered him from head to foot.

'What do we do with him now?' said one of them.

'Wait,' replied the one who appeared to be their leader. 'I have here the list of the four principle murders that he has committed judicially. Let us read it to him.'

In 1750 he condemned to the wheel an unfortunate whose only wrong was to have refused him his daughter whom he wished to abuse.

In '54 he offered to save a man's life for two thousand crowns. The man not being able to provide them, he had him hanged.

In '60 knowing that a man in his town had made some remarks about him, he condemned him to the stake the follow-

ing year as a sodomite, although the unfortunate had a wife and a troop of children, and all the facts gave the lie to his crime

In '72 a young man of distinction in the province wished to avenge himself light heartedly upon a courtesan who had made him an unwelcome present by spanking her This unworthy clodhopper turned the game into a criminal affair, treated the thing as murder, as poisoning, and dragging all his Parliamentary colleagues after him in this ridiculous judgment, disgraced the young man, ruined him and had him condemned to death in contempt, not being able to succeed in laying hands upon his person

Those are his principle crimes, my friends, make your decision

Immediately one voice was heard saying An eye for an eye, friends, a tooth for a tooth He has unjustly condemned a man to the wheel, I will have him broken on the wheel'

'I lean towards hanging said another, 'and for the same motives as my colleague

'He shall be burnt, said the third, 'both for having dared to use this torture unjustly, and also for having often deserved it himself

'Let us show him an example of clemency and moderation, comrades, said the leader and let us take our text only from his fourth episode A whipped whore is a crime worthy of death in the eyes of this imbecilic ignoramus, then let him be flogged himself

They seized hold of the unfortunate president at once, laid him face down on a narrow bench, and bound him tightly to it from head to foot The four devilish spirits each took up a leather strap five feet long, and belaboured rhythmically with all the strength in their arms the exposed portions of the unlucky Fontanis who was lacerated for three quarters of an hour in succession by the vigorous hands responsible for his education, and soon displayed one single wound from which the blood was spurting everywhere

'That's enough, said the chief, 'as I said, let us give him

an example of pity and benevolence. If the blackguard had us in his hands, he would have us quartered. We are masters over him, and we give him quittance with this brotherly correction. Let him learn from our lesson that it is not always by assassinating men that you succeed in improving them. He has only had five hundred strokes, and I bet against all takers that he has been reformed of his injustices, and in the future will make one of the most honest magistrates of his company. Untie him, and let us continue with our operations'.

'Ugh!' exclaimed the president when he saw that his tormentors had departed. 'I see plainly that if we hold a torch to the actions of others, if we seek to expose them in order to have the delight of punishing them, I see plainly that it recoils at once upon our own heads. And who then was able to tell these people all my deeds, how is it that they are so well informed about my behaviour?'

However it may have been, Fontanis put himself to rights as best he could, but he had hardly put on his clothes before he heard the most frightful screams from the direction in which the ghosts had left the room. He listened carefully and recognised the voice of the marquis calling for help with all his might.

'The devil take me if I budge an inch,' said the exhausted president. 'Let those rogues beat him if they want to, as they did me, I'll have nothing to do with it. Everyone has enough with his own troubles without interfering in those of others.'

The noise increased, however, and in the end d'Olincourt entered Fontanis' room, followed by two servants, all three of them shouting wildly as if they had had their throats slit. All three seemed covered in blood, one had his arm in a sling, another a bandage on his forehead, and seeing them pale, dishevelled and bloody as they were, you would have sworn they had just fought a legion of devils escaped from Hell.

'Oh, my friend, what an onslaught,' cried d'Olincourt. 'I thought all three of us would have been strangled.'

'I defy you to have been more ill-treated than I,' said the

president showing them his completely devastated back. 'See what they did to me.'

'Oh, by my faith, my friend,' said the colonel, 'you certainly are in a position to make a glorious complaint, you cannot be ignorant of the powerful interest your colleagues have taken in every age in physical punishment. Call all the Chambers together my friend, and find some celebrated advocate who would like to practise his eloquence in favour of your bruises. Make use of the ingenious artifice by which an ancient orator swayed the areopagus by uncovering before the eyes of the court the superb bosom of the beauty for whom he was pleading, and let your Demosthenes, at the most pitiful moment of his plea, expose this fascinating body that it may move the audience to pity. Above all remind the judges of Paris before whom you will be obliged to appear of that famous incident of 1769 when their hearts were moved far more by compassion for the beaten harp than for the people whose fathers they claimed to be and yet allowed to die of hunger: they decided to bring a criminal action against a young soldier who found on his return from sacrificing the best years of his life to the service of his prince no laurels but only the humiliation prepared for him by the hand of the greatest enemies of this land that he had been defending. . .

'Come, my comrade in misfortune, let us hurry, let us leave, there is no safety for us in this damned chateau. Let us seek vengeance, fly to implore the equity of the protectors of public safety, the defenders of the oppressed, the pillars of the State'.

'I can stand up no longer,' said the president, 'and even if those damned swine are to peel me like an apple once again, I beg you to provide me with a bed, and leave me there in peace for at least twenty-four hours'.

'You must not think of it, my friend, you will be strangled.'

'So be it, it will only be tit for tat, and remorse is so flooding my heart now, that I shall regard as a command from Heaven all the misfortunes it may be pleased to inflict on me.'

Since the commotion had entirely ceased, and d'Olincourt

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perceived that the poor Provençal really needed a little rest, he summoned Master Pierre and asked him if there was any reason to fear the return of the mischief-makers that night.

'No, sir,' answered the farmer, 'you see, they'll be quiet now for eight or ten days, and you can get some rest in complete safety'.

The battered president was led to a room where he went to bed and rested as well as possible for a good twelve hours. He was still there when he suddenly felt himself drenched in the bed. He looked up and saw that the ceiling was pierced with hundreds of holes, each spurting water like a fountain, and that he risked being flooded unless he struck camp at full speed. Completely naked, he hurtled downstairs where he found the colonel and Master Pierre forgetting their troubles over a pâté and a barricade of Burgundy bottles. Their first reaction was to burst out laughing at the sight of Fontanis hurrying towards them in such an indecent costume. He recounted his new afflictions, and they forced him to sit up at the table without giving him time to put on his breeches which he still carried under his arm in the manner of the people of Pegu. The president began to drink and found consolation for his woes at the end of his third bottle of wine. As they still had two hours more than was needed for the return to d'Olincourt, the horses were prepared and they set off.

'That was a hard lesson, marquis, that you made me learn there,' said the Provençal when he found himself in the saddle.

'It won't be the last, my friend,' replied d'Olincourt. 'Men are born to learn lessons, and particularly men of law. It is under cover of the ermine that stupidity erects its temple, and it only breathes in peace in your tribunals. Whatever you may have to say about it, however, ought we to have left this château without discovering what was going on there?'

'Are we any further forward for having discovered it?'

'Certainly, we can now deliver our complaints with greater right.'

'Complaints! The devil take me if I make any, I will keep

what I have for myself, and I will be infinitely obliged to you if you speak of it to no one.'

'My friend, you are not consistent; if it is ridiculous to make complaints when you have been maltreated, why do you unceasingly solicit and excite them? How now! Do you, one of the greatest enemies of crime, wish to let it go unpunished, when you have such proof of it? Is it not one of the most sublime axioms of jurisprudence that even supposing the injured party abandons his claim, justice still demands satisfaction? Is it not therefore plainly violated in what has just happened to you, and ought you to refuse it the just homage which it demands?'

'As much as you please, but I shall not say a word.'

'And your wife's dowry?'

'I will leave everything to the baron's sense of fairness, and I will make him alone responsible for clearing up the affair.'

'He will take no part in it.'

'Very well then, we shall live on crusts.'

'Brave fellow! You will be the cause of your wife cursing you and repenting all her life of having linked her fate with a coward of your kind.'

'Oh, as far as remorse goes, we shall each of us have our share, I think, but why do you now want me to lay complaints when earlier on you were far from wanting that?'

'I did not know what was concerned. As long as I thought it possible to win without outside help, I chose that course as the most honest, and now that I find it essential for us to call upon the assistance of the law, I suggest it to you. How then is my conduct inconsistent?'

'Excellent, excellent,' said Fontanis, dismounting, since they had arrived at d'Olincourt. 'But don't say a word. I beg you. That is the only favour I ask of you.'

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(In their absence Mlle de Téroze has taken to her bed with an alleged illness which effectively keeps the president from making any conjugal claims on her, and the château party

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has been joined by three newcomers, M. and Madame de Totteville and their attractive eighteen-year-old daughter Lucile. In fact the new guests are charlatans, hired as part of the plot against de Fontanis. Deprived of his wife, the president, aided by La Brie's encouragements, endeavours to seduce Lucile.)

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This little arrangement had been going on for about four days without anyone appearing to remark it, when notices from gazettes and news-sheets were received at the Castle inviting all astronomers to observe on the following night 'the passage of Venus through the sign of Capricorn'.

'Goodness me,' said the president like a connoisseur, as soon as he had read this news, 'this event is remarkable I would never have expected such a phenomenon. As you know, ladies, I have dabbled in this science and I have even written a book in six volumes on the satellites of Mars'

'On the satellites of Mars!' said the marquise smiling 'They are all the same not very propitious in your case, president. I am surprised that you have chosen this subject'.

'Always playful, delightful marquise. I can see clearly that my secret has not been kept, but all the same I am very curious about the event which is being announced. Have you a place here, marquis, where we can go to observe the passage of this planet?'

'Certainly,' replied the marquis. 'I have, over my dovecote, a most suitable observatory. You will find there excellent telescopes, quadrants, compasses, in fact everything necessary for an astronomer's observation room.'

'So you have had some experience of astronomy then?'

'Not at all. But we all have eyes, we find people who understand these things and we are glad to learn from them.'

'Oh, very well. It will be a pleasure for me to give you some lessons, and in six weeks I will teach you how to know the earth better than Descartes or Copernicus.'

However, the time came to go to the observatory. The president was heartbroken that his wife's indisposition deprived him of the pleasure of playing the professor in front of her;

he did not realise, poor devil, that it was she who was to play the leading role in this extraordinary performance.

Although balloons had not yet become usual they were already known in 1779, and the clever physicist who was to carry out the one of which we shall speak now was more learned than any other who followed him and had the good sense to show his admiration like the others, and not to say a word when intruders arrived to deprive him of his discovery. In the middle of a perfectly constructed aerostat, at the prescribed hour, Mlle de Teroze was to make the ascent in the arms of the Comte d'Elbène, and this scene viewed from far off and lit only by an artificial faint light was cleverly enough devised to take in a stupid man like the president, who had never in the whole of his life read one work concerning the science on which he prided himself.

The entire company came to the top of the tower, armed themselves with telescopes, and the balloon ascended.

'Can you see?' said everybody all at once.

'Not yet.'

'Oh yes, I can.'

'That's not it.'

'No, you're wrong.'

'On the left, on the left.'

'Look towards the East.'

'Oh, I've got it,' cried the president full of enthusiasm. 'I've got it, friends. Look my way, a little nearer Mercury, not so far away as Mars, a good way below the orbit of Saturn. There! Oh gracious heavens, how fine it is!'

'I can see like the president' said the marquis. 'It really is wonderful. Can you see the conjunction?'

'I've got it at the end of my telescope.'

And as the balloon passed at that moment over the tower, the marquis said, 'Well, were the notices we received misleading, and was not that Venus over Capricorn?'

'Nothing more certain' replied the president. 'It is the finest sight I've seen in all my life.'

'Who knows' said the marquis, 'if you will always be forced

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to go so high in order to see it at your ease?’

‘Ah, marquis, how your jokes are out of place at such a fine moment! . . .’

And as the balloon lost itself in the darkness, everyone came out mightily pleased with the allegorical phenomenon which art had just lent to nature. . .

Mlle de Téroze was improving. Although she still looked a little tired, she came down for meals, however, and was already even taking little strolls with the company. The president, less attentive because Lucile alone occupied his thoughts, saw nevertheless that he would soon have to devote himself entirely to his wife. Consequently he determined “to press hard the other affair which had reached a critical point. Mlle de Totteville no longer put up any difficulty, and the only question was to find a safe location. The president suggested his dressing-room. Lucile who was not sleeping in her parents’ room, willingly accepted this rendezvous for the same night, and immediately informed the marquis. Her role was outlined to her, and the remainder of the day passed off peacefully. At eleven o’clock, Lucile, who was to go first to the president’s bed, with the aid of a key which he had entrusted to her, pretended a headache and departed. A quarter of an hour later, the eager Fontanis withdrew, but the marquise claimed that this evening in order to do him honour she wished to accompany him to his room. The whole company played up to the joke, and Mlle de Téroze was the first to be amused. Disregarding the president, who was on tenterhooks and would well have wished within to escape from this ridiculous courtesy or at least to warn the girl whom he imagined they would discover, every one took up a candle, and, the men in front, the women clustering around Fontanis, offering him their arms, the jovial procession repaired to the door of his room. Our unfortunate gallant was scarcely able to breathe.

‘It’s no responsibility of mine,’ he stuttered. ‘Think how imprudently you are acting. Who knows but what the object of my loves is not perhaps at this very moment waiting in my bed for me, and if that is so, consider seriously all that might

result from your indiscreet behaviour'

'At all events,' said the marquise, flinging open the door, 'on we go Show yourself, you beauty, waiting, so we are told, in the president's bed for him, and do not be afraid'.

But what was the surprise of everyone, when the lights opposite the bed illuminated a monstrous ass, comfortably embedded beneath the covers and doubtless highly satisfied with the part it was being made to play, and by an amusing trick of fate, sleeping peacefully upon the magisterial couch and snoring voluptuously

'Upon my word,' cried d'Olincourt, holding his sides with laughter, 'consider for a moment, president, the happy indifference of this animal Wouldn't you say that it is exactly one of your colleagues at a hearing?'

The president, however, highly pleased to be quit of the affair at the price of a witticism, imagining that it would throw a veil over the rest, and that Lucile, having learnt of it first would have had the prudence to let no one suspect anything of their intrigue, the president, I say, began to laugh with the others The ass, greatly disturbed at having his sleep interrupted, was extricated as best they could, new sheets were put on the bed, and Fontanis worthily replaced the most superb ass that could be found in the district

'To be honest, it's all the same, said the marquise when she had seen him to bed 'I would never have thought that there could be such complete resemblance between an ass and a president of the Parliament of Aix'

'That was your mistake then,' countered the marquise 'Did you not know, then, that it is from these doctors that that court has always chosen its members? I would wager that the one you saw leaving the room has been its first president

The next morning Fontanis' first thought was to ask Lucile how she had wriggled out of the affair She, well rehearsed, said that having learnt of the joke she had with drawn very promptly but in some anxiety that she had been betrayed, which had caused her to pass a dreadful night and to wait most ardently for the moment when she could receive

an explanation. The president reassured her and secured his revenge from her for the next day. Lucile prudishly offered a little resistance, and when Fontanis only became more ardent, everything was arranged in accordance with his desires. But if the first rendezvous had been troubled by a scene of comedy, what fatal occurrence was to prevent the second! Arrangements were made as on the previous evening, Lucile retiring first, the president following shortly after without anyone whatever hindering him. He found her at the agreed rendezvous, and flung his arms around her. He was already preparing to give her unequivocal proofs of his passion when suddenly. . . the doors opened, there was M. and Madame de Tottville, there was the marquise, there was Mlle de Téroze herself.

'Monster!' she cried, throwing herself in her fury upon her husband. 'So this is how you mock my trust and my tenderness!'

'Abominable girl!' said M. de Tottville to Lucile, who had flung herself at her father's feet. 'This then is how you abuse the generous liberty we granted you!'

The marquise and Mme de Tottville for their part cast looks of rage upon the two sinners, and Mme d'Olincourt was only distracted from this immediate reaction by receiving in her arms her sister who had fainted. It would be difficult to depict Fontanis' face in the midst of this scene. Surprise, shame, terror, anxiety, all these different emotions troubled him at the same time and paralysed him like a statue. But then the marquis arrived, asking questions and learning with indignation all that had happened.

'Sir,' said Lucile's father to him with emphasis, 'I would never have expected that in your house an honourable girl would have to fear insults of this kind. You will understand that I do not tolerate it, and my wife, my daughter and I shall leave at once, to demand justice from those from whom we can expect it'.

'Truly, sir,' said the marquis drily to the president, 'you will agree that such scenes as this are hardly what I have a right to expect. Was it then only in order to dishonour my sister-in-

law and my house, that you were pleased to ally yourself with us?' Then turning to Totteville, 'Nothing could be more just than the reparation that you are demanding, but I dare to beg you urgently not to precipitate a scandal. It is not for that scoundrel there that I ask it, he deserves only contempt and punishment. It is for me, sir, for my family, for my unhappy father in law, who has placed all his confidence in this scally wag, and will die of grief at such deception'

'I would like to oblige you, sir' said M de Totteville proudly, as he led his wife and daughter away, 'but you will permit me to place my honour above such considerations. You will be in no way compromised, sir, in the charges I shall make, this indecent wretch alone will be. Please understand that I will hear no more, and that I am going immediately to answer the call of vengeance'

With these words, the three of them withdrew. No human effort could have stopped them and they hastened to Paris, they said, to make a plea to the Parliament against the indignities which President de Fontanis had wished to heap upon them.

But in the unhappy château trouble and despair reigned supreme. Mlle de Feroze, barely recovered, took to her bed again with a fever that was carefully declared to be dangerous. M and Mme d'Olincourt fulminated against the president, who, having no other sanctuary than this house in the extremity that threatened him, did not dare to revolt against the reprimands that were so justly addressed to him. Matters remained in this state for three days, when finally the marquis learnt from secret information that the affair was of the utmost gravity and was being treated as a criminal matter and that Fontanis was about to be proscribed.

'What! Without hearing my side,' said the terrified president.

'Is that the rule?' answered d'Olincourt. 'Are those whom the law proscribes allowed any means of defence? Is it not one of your most admirable customs to condemn without a hearing? They are only using against you the weapons you

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have employed against others. Is it not reasonable that you, after having exercised injustice for thirty years, should at least once in your life become its victim?’

‘But just over a few women?’

‘How do you mean, a few women? Don’t you know that those are the most dangerous? What else was that unfortunate affair, the memories of which were worth five hundred strokes of the whip to you in the haunted château, but a question of women? And did you not believe that over a question of women you could allow yourself to ruin a nobleman? An eye for an eye, president, that is your yardstick, then submit to it yourself courageously.’

‘Merciful Heaven,’ said Fontanis. ‘In God’s name, brother, don’t desert me.’

‘Be sure that we shall rescue you, whatever dishonour you have brought upon us, and whatever grievances we may have against you, but the means are hard. . . you know what they are.’

‘What are they then?’

‘The King’s favour, a *lettre de cachet*, that is all I can see.’

‘What terrible extremes!’

‘I agree, but what others are there? Would you leave France and ruin yourself for ever, when a few years in prison will perhaps arrange everything? Besides, have you not at times used yourself this means which appals you so much, you and your like? Was it not by your barbarous advice that it was employed to crush the gentleman that the spirits avenged so well? Did you not dare by means of a prevarication as dangerous as it was punishable to force this unfortunate soldier to choose between prison or disgrace and only suspend your contemptible onslaughts on condition that he was crushed by those of his King? As a result, my dear man, nothing in what I am suggesting to you should astonish you, for not only is this method known to you, but it should now be welcomed.’

‘Unhappy memories,’ cried the president, tears coursing down his face. ‘Who could have told me that the vengeance

of Heaven would break over my head almost at the same moment as my crimes are consummated! What I have done comes back upon me. Let us suffer, suffer and hold our peace.'

As assistance was urgent, however, the marquise pressed her husband to set off for Fontainebleau, where the court was then in residence. Mlle de Téroze took no part in this council; shame and grief on the surface, and the Comte d'Elbène inside, kept her still to her room, with the door firmly closed against the president. He had presented himself several times, and tried to persuade her with his tears and remorse to open it, but always in vain.

And so the marquis departed. His journey was short, and he returned two days later, escorted by two policemen, and furnished with an alleged order, the mere sight of which caused the president to tremble in every limb.

'You could not have arrived more opportunely!' said the marquise, who pretended to have received news from Paris while her husband was at court. 'The case is moving with an incredible speed, and my friends write to me to get the president away as soon as possible. My father has been informed and is in despair. He recommends us to serve his friend well and to portray to him the grief in which all this plunges him. . .his health will only allow him to offer prayers for his friend's safety, they would have been more sincere if he had been wiser . . . here is the letter.'

The marquis read it hastily, and after haranguing Fontanis who was having difficulty in steeling himself to go to prison, handed him over to the two guards, in reality two quartermasters from his own regiment, and exhorted him to console himself all the more because he would not lose sight of him.

'With great difficulty,' he told him, 'I have obtained a fortified château situated five or six leagues from here. There you will be under the orders of one of my old friends who will treat you as if you were myself. I am writing to him through your guards, recommending you to him even more strongly, so you may set your mind at rest.'

The president wept like a child. Nothing is so bitter as

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the remorse of a criminal who sees all the horrors which he has used himself descending upon his own head. . .but nevertheless there was no escape. He asked at once for permission to embrace his wife.

'Your wife,' said the marquise abruptly, 'she is not that yet, luckily, and in all the disasters that beset us that is the only relief we can find'.

'So be it,' said the president, 'I shall bear even that wound with courage', and he climbed up into the carriage with his guards.

The château to which the unfortunate man was being taken was part of an estate belonging to *M^re d'Olincourt's* dowry and everything was prepared for his reception. A captain of d'Olincourt's regiment, a dour and forbidding man, was to play the part of the governor. He received Fontanis, dismissed the guards, and, leading his prisoner away to a very mean room, told him harshly that he had had subsequent orders for him, of a severity which it was impossible for him to set aside. The president was left in this cruel situation for nearly a month. Nobody came to see him, he was fed entirely upon soup, bread and water, he slept upon straw in a shockingly damp room, and his gaolers only visited him as in the Bastille, that is to say, as with beasts in a menagerie, solely to bring his food. The wretched lawyer during this fatal period suffered bitter thoughts, with no one to disturb them. At last the false governor appeared, and having offered him some crumbs of consolation spoke to him as follows:

'You should be in no doubt, sir, that your first wrong was in wishing to ally yourself to a family so superior to you in every respect. The Baron de Téroze and the Marquis d'Olin-court are gentlemen of the oldest nobility in all France, and you are only a miserable Provençal lawyer, without name or influence, without rank or consequence. Some self-reflection on your part should have caused you to confess to the Baron de Téroze, who was blind where you were concerned, that you were no match for his daughter. Besides, how could you think for one moment that this girl, as beautiful as love itself, could

ever become the wife of a villainous old ape like you? Some self-deception is permissible, but not to that degree. The reflections that you must have made during your stay here, sir, must have convinced you that for the four months you stayed with the marquis d'Olincourt you were no more than a buffoon and a laughing-stock. People of your degree and address, your profession and your ignorance, your wickedness and treachery should expect nothing but this kind of treatment. By a thousand tricks, each one more laughable than the last, you were prevented from enjoying the girl to whom you laid claim. You were given five hundred lashes in a haunted château, you were shown your wife in the arms of the man she adores, which you stupidly took to be a phenomenon, you were embroiled with a hired whore who made a fool of you, and, to be brief, you were shut up in this château where it rests only with my colonel, the Marquis d'Olincourt to keep you to the end of your life, which will certainly happen if you refuse to sign this statement here. Before you read it, sir, remember that in public you are accounted only as a man who was to marry Mlle de Téroze, in no way as her husband. Your marriage was kept as secret as possible, the few witnesses have agreed to renounce their presence, the priest has returned the record, which I have here, and the lawyer has sent back the contract, as you can see with your own eyes. Furthermore, you have never slept with your wife, and your marriage is therefore void, and tacitly annulled with the full consent of all parties, which gives the breaking of it as much force as if it were the work of the civil and religious laws. Similarly here are the renunciations of the Baron de Téroze and his daughter. All that is lacking is your own, this one here. Choose, sir, between signing this paper in all good will, and ending your days without any doubt here. . . Answer, I have no more to say.'

After a little reflection the president took the document and read these words:

'I declare to all who may read this that I have never been the husband of Mlle de Téroze. By this document I return to her all the rights that were sometime believed to have been

given to me upon her, and I promise never in my life to reclaim them. Furthermore I have only praise for the treatment I have received from her and her family during the summer that I spent in their house. It is with common accord and all goodwill towards each other that we renounce mutually the plans for union that were conceived for us and give each other reciprocally the freedom to dispose of our persons as if there had never been any intention of joining us together. And it is in complete freedom of both body and mind that I sign this in the Château de Valnord, belonging to madame la marquise d'Olincourt.'

'You have told me, sir,' continued the president after reading these words, 'what I may expect if I do not sign, but you have said nothing of what will happen if I agree to everything'.

'Your reward will be your immediate release, sir,' replied the false governor, 'a request that you will accept this jewel worth two hundred louis from the Marquise d'Olincourt, and the certainty of finding your servant and two excellent horses waiting at the door of the château to take you back to Aix'.

'I sign, and depart, sir, my delivery from everyone here is too close to my heart for me to hesitate one minute.'

'Splendid, president,' said the captain taking the signed statement and handing over the jewel, 'but be careful how you behave. Once outside, if any mad desire for revenge should seize you at any time, consider before yielding to it that you are dealing with a strong adversary, and that this powerful family whom you would offend completely by your actions would immediately have you taken for a madman, and the hospital for such unfortunates would become your final residence'.

'Have no fear, sir,' said the president. 'I am the first person to desire no more truck with such people, and I assure you I will know how to avoid them.'

'That is my advice, president,' said the captain, opening at

last his prison for him. 'Go in peace, and never let this part of the country see you again.'

'You may count upon my word,' said the lawyer, as he mounted his horse, 'this little incident has corrected all my vices, and I would live another thousand years before I would come to Paris again to choose a wife. Sometimes I have imagined the grief of being made a cuckold after marriage, but I had never heard that it was possible to be made one before. . . The same wisdom and discretion in my decrees, I will no more set myself up as mediator between whores and men who are worth more than I, it costs too much to side with that sort of lady, and I no longer wish to have any dealings with folk whose minds are all prepared to avenge themselves'.

The president disappeared and learnt wisdom at his own expense; no one was heard to speak of him any more. The whores complained that they were no longer looked after in Provence, and morality gained ground there, because the young women, seeing themselves deprived of this indecent support, preferred the path of virtue to the dangers which they could expect on the road to vice when magistrates were wise enough to realise the dreadful unsuitability of supporting them with their protection.

You may well imagine that during the president's arrest the Marquis d'Olincourt, having weaned the Baron de Téroze from his too favourable prejudice for Fontanis, had arranged that all the dispositions that you have just seen were safely achieved. His skill and his influence were so successful in this that three months later Mlle de Téroze was publicly married to the Comte d'Elbène, with whom she lived in perfect happiness.

'I sometimes feel a little sorry for treating that villainous creature so badly,' said the marquis one day to his lovable sister-in-law, 'but when on one side I see the happiness that has resulted from my actions, and on the other I am convinced that I only harried a fool, useless to society, essentially an enemy of the State, a disrupter of public peace, the torturer of an honest, respectable family, and the infamous slanderer

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of a gentleman whom I esteem, and to whom I have the honour to be connected, I comfort myself, and echo the philosopher—
Oh sovereign Providence, why is it that the ways of men are so limited that they only ever succeed in doing good by means of a little evil! '*

* This story was finished on the 16 July, 1787, at ten o'clock in the evening.

MISS HENRIETTA STRALSON

OR

THE EFFECTS OF DESPAIR

AN ENGLISH STORY

One evening when London's Ranelagh was arrayed in all its beauty, Lord Granwell, who at the age of thirty-six or thereabouts was the most debauched, wicked and cruel man in all England, and unfortunately one of the richest, sat appeasing his conscience with the help of punch and champagne, and three of his friends. An attractive young woman whom he had never seen before passed near his table.

'Who is that girl?' Granwell asked his companions eagerly, 'and how can a face so fine as that have existed in London, and escaped my notice? I bet she's not sixteen. What do you say, James?'

SIR JAMES: 'A figure fit for one of the Graces! Don't you know her? Wilson?'

WILSON: 'This is the second time that I have seen her. She is the daughter of some Herefordshire baronet.'

GRANWELL: 'Were she the daughter of the devil I must have her or be struck dead. I charge you to find her for me.'

GAVE: 'What is her name, Wilson? Miss Henrietta Stralson. That tall woman whom you see with her is her mother. Her father is dead. For some time now she has been in love with a gentleman of Hereford called Williams. They are to be married. Williams has come here to collect the inheritance of an old aunt, which constitutes his entire fortune. Meanwhile Lady Stralson wished to show her daughter London, and when Williams' affairs are settled, they will all return together to Hereford, where the marriage will take place.'

GRANWELL: 'May all the furies of Hell have my soul, if Williams touches her before I do! Never have I seen such a pretty

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thing. Is Williams there too? I don't know this bumpkin, let me see him.'

WILSON: 'He is just behind them there. He probably stopped to chat with some of his acquaintances. He is rejoining them now. Do you see him? that one over there.'

GRANWELL: 'That tall, good-looking young man?'

WILSON: 'Precisely.'

GRANWELL: 'Damnation, he's hardly twenty.'

GAVE: 'He is a fine man, indeed, milord. There's a rival for you.'

GRANWELL: 'Whom I shall dispose of, like many others before him. Gave, get up and follow that angel—she has indeed made an impression on me—follow her, Gave, and try to learn all you can about her. Put spies on her tracks. Have you money, Gave, money? Here's a hundred guineas. By tomorrow morning there should be none left, and I should know everything. . . . Am I in love? Wilson, what do you say about it? All the same, the moment I saw her, I certainly had an intuition. . . . Sir James, this heavenly creature shall either have my fortune or my life.'

SIR JAMES: 'Fortune perhaps, but as for your life, I hardly think it in your nature to die for a woman!'

GRANWELL: 'No. . . .' (and milord, as he spoke that word, shivered involuntarily, then went on) 'all that is a figure of speech, my friend, we don't die for such creatures, but there are some in truth who can arouse men's souls in a most extraordinary way! Here, waiters, bring us some Burgundy. My head is on fire, and I can only cool it down with such a wine.'

WILSON: 'Is it true, milord, that you can feel foolish enough to upset the loves of this poor man Williams?'

GRANWELL: 'What does Williams matter to me? What does the whole world matter? Listen, my friend, when this fiery heart of mine burns with a new passion, no obstacle shall stand in the way of its satisfaction. The greater the hindrance, the more annoyed I become. There is nothing more trifling in this world, my friend, than the possession of a woman. When

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you have had one, you have had a hundred. The only way to rid these insipid triumphs of their monotony is to win them by trickery alone, and it is on the ruins of a multitude of conquered prejudices that you can find some attraction in it.'

WILSON: 'Would it not be better to try to please a woman. . . to attempt to take her favours from a hand stretched out in love, than to obtain her by violence?'

GRANWELL: 'What you say would be true if women were more sincere. But as there is not one in the whole world who is not false and treacherous, they must be treated like the vipers which we use in medicine—cut off the head in order to have the body—take at whatever cost what little good their bodies offer, and so subdue the moral faculties that you never feel their effects.'

SIR JAMES: 'That is the sort of maxim I like.'

GRANWELL: 'Sir James is my pupil, and some day I shall make use of him. . . But here is Gave back again, let us hear his news.'

After Gave had sat down, and drunk a glass of wine, he said to Granwell. 'Your goddess has gone, together with Williams and Lady Stralson. They hired a coach, and they said to the coachman—(Cecil Street'

GRANWELL: 'What—so close to me! Did you have them followed?'

GAVE: 'I put three men on them, three of the cleverest rogues that ever escaped from Newgate.'

GRANWELL: 'Well, Gave, is she pretty?'

GAVE: 'The most beautiful person in all London. Stanley, Stafford, Filmer, Burckley, they have all followed her, all danced around her, all agreed that in the three kingdoms there is not a girl to touch her.'

GRANWELL, eagerly: 'Have you heard her say anything? Did she speak? Have the flattering tones of her voice fallen upon your ears, have you breathed the air she has just purified? Well, speak, my friend, speak, don't you see my head is

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turned by her? Either I have her, or I leave England for ever.'

GAVE: 'I heard her, milord. She did speak. She told Williams that it was very hot at Ranelagh, and she preferred to go home than to continue walking any longer.'

GRANWELL: 'And this Williams?'

GAVE: 'He seems very strongly attached to her, his eyes devoured her. You might say that love has chained him to her side.'

GRANWELL: 'I detest the rascal, and I rather fear circumstances will force me to get rid of the fellow. Let us leave, friends. Thank you, Wilson, for your information. Keep my secret, or I shall tell all London of your intrigue with Lady Montmart. And Sir James, meet me tomorrow in the park, and we shall go together to see the little dancer from the Opera. What am I saying? No, I shall not go. I have but one idea in my head now. In all the world there is only Miss Stralson who can interest me. I have eyes only for her, my soul exists only to adore her. . . . You, Gave, will come and dine with me tomorrow, bringing all the information you can gather about this heavenly creature, the sole arbiter of my future destiny. Goodbye, my friends.'

His lordship sprang into his carriage, and sped away to fulfil the duties of his post in the Royal Bedchamber.

The few details that Wilson had given about the young beauty who had turned Granwell's head could not have been more correct.

Miss Henrietta Stralson, born in Hereford, had in fact come to see London, a city unknown to her, while Williams completed his business, and they would all return afterwards to their home county to consummate their betrothal in marriage.

Nor was it at all surprising that Miss Stralson had aroused such unanimous appreciation at Ranelagh. A bewitching figure, the gentlest, most seductive eyes, the loveliest hair in the world, features unequalled for their fineness, delicacy and ethereal quality—add to that a most delicious voice, an abundance of gentleness, vivacity, and wit, tempered by an air of

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virtue and modesty which lent even further piquancy to her charms, and all this at seventeen; she could not fail to please, and Henrietta had indeed made an overwhelming sensation. She was the talk of London.

Of Williams it can be said that he was what is called an honest fellow, good and loyal, without art or deception. He had worshipped Henrietta since childhood, staking all his happiness upon winning her one day, and offering in return sincere devotion, a sizeable fortune if his lawsuit succeeded, a parentage that, if a little inferior to his lady's, was still respectable, and finally, a pleasant face.

Lady Stralson was also an excellent person who prized her daughter as her most valuable possession in the world and loved her as only a true provincial mother can, for all sentiments are debased in capital cities—with every breath of the infested air virtue deteriorates, and in such general depravity the only alternative to complete corruption is escape.

Granwell, flushed with love and wine, was no sooner in the royal antechamber than he realised that he was in no state to present himself. Returning home, instead of sleeping, he abandoned himself to the wildest and most extravagant schemes for possessing the object of his raptures. After examining and rejecting, one by one, at least a hundred, each more frightful than the last, he decided finally to make Henrietta and Williams quarrel, to try if possible to embroil Williams in affairs from which it would take him a long time to escape: in the interval he would seize every opportunity of encounters with his beloved to compromise her in London itself, or to kidnap her and take her to one of his estates on the Scottish border where in complete mastery of her nothing could prevent him from the fulfilment of his desires. This plan, suitably embellished with atrocities, became, for that reason, the most congenial to the treacherous Granwell, and the following day, therefore, all steps were taken to make it a success.

Gave was Granwell's intimate friend. Blessed with an even baser conscience, he fulfilled for his lordship the function, so common in these days, of administering to the passions of

others, aggravating their debaucheries, and profiting by their follies at the cost of personal honour. He did not fail to keep his appointment next day, but the only information he could give then was that Lady Stralson and her daughter were staying, as already known, in Cecil Street with one of their relatives, and that Williams was at the Hotel Poland in Covent Garden.

'Gave,' said his lordship, 'you must answer for this Williams. Adopt the name and guise of a Scotsman, and arrive tomorrow, in full splendour, at the same hotel as this peasant. Strike up an acquaintance with him, rob him and ruin him. Meanwhile, I shall attend to the women, and you will see, my friend, that in less than a month we shall upset the honest little appercart of these respectable provincials'.

Gave was careful to find no inconvenience in the designs of his patron; the adventure would be costly, and it was obvious that the more milord spent, the more lucrative for the ignoble minister would be the execution of his criminal whims. He therefore began his preparations, while milord, on his side, carefully surrounded Henrietta with a host of minor agents to give him an exact account of even the most unimportant movements of this charming girl.

Miss Henrietta was staying with a relative of her mother's, a Lady Wately, who had been a widow for the last ten years.

Captivated by Henrietta, whom she had never known before the girl's visit to the capital, Lady Wately neglected nothing which would show off in all her brilliance the object of her pride and affection, but this devoted cousin had kept to her room for a fortnight with an inflammation, and had not only missed the last excursion to Ranelagh but had also to forgo the pleasure of accompanying her cousin to the Opera, which would take place the next day.

Immediately Granwell learnt of this projected visit from the spies placed about his mistress he determined to profit by it. Learning from more detailed information that the ladies would hire a coach, as Lady Wately needed her own horses for the use of her doctor, he hastened at once to the owner of the coach that had been ordered, and without any difficulty

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arranged for a wheel to break, three or four streets away from where the ladies would set out. So completely engrossed in his stratagem that he never considered the danger of such an accident to the life of his loved one, he paid up handsomely and returned home full of joy. He left again at the same time as he knew Henrietta would be leaving, instructing the coachmen who took him to await in the neighbourhood of Cecil Street the departure of such and such a coach from Lady Wately's, to follow on as soon as he saw it, and not to allow any other coach to come between them.

Granwell felt sure that on leaving Lady Wately the ladies would go to collect Williams at the Hotel Poland. He was not mistaken. Before long, however, the journey became an adventure. The wheel broke, the women screamed, a servant broke a limb. Granwell, indifferent to everything but his own success, drew up beside the wrecked coach, and leaping out offered his hand and the assistance of his carriage to Lady Stralson.

'You are too kind, my lord,' she replied. 'These hired coaches are really shocking in London. You can go nowhere without risking your life. Steps should be taken to remedy such inconveniences.'

GRANWELL 'Do not take it amiss, madam, if I do not complain since it appears that no harm has come to you or your young companion, and it gives me the very precious opportunity to be of some service to you.'

LADY STRALSON 'You are most obliging, my lord. But my footman seems hurt, this incident has upset me.'

And his lordship, calling at once for some chairmen, ordered them to pick up the injured servant. The ladies, having disposed of the footman, climbed into Granwell's carriage, which set off for the Hotel Poland.

It is hard to imagine the state of his lordship when he found himself next to the girl he loved in circumstances which gave their meeting the appearance of services rendered.

'The young lady is doubtless visiting some acquaintances at the Hotel Poland,' he said to Henrietta as the carriage moved off.

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'It is more than just a visit to an acquaintance, my lord,' said Lady Stralson with frankness. 'It is a lover, a husband, we are calling upon.'

GRANWELL: 'How upset the young lady would have been if this accident had delayed so promising a pleasure. I congratulate myself still more on my good fortune in being able to do you this service.'

MISS STRALSON: 'Your lordship is too kind to worry about us, we are most grieved to be such a trouble, and my mother will permit me to tell her that I am afraid we have committed an indiscretion.'

GRANWELL: 'You are unjust, miss, to regard the greatest happiness of my life in such a way. But if I dare commit an indiscretion myself—will you not need my carriage to continue your afternoon's arrangements? If so, I should be most happy if you would accept it.'

MISS STRALSON: 'It would be too great an imposition, my lord. We were going on to the Opera, but we will be spending the evening with the friend we are now going to see.'

GRANWELL: 'You repay me badly for the service which you yourselves admit in refusing me permission to continue it. I beg you not to deprive yourself of the pleasures you had anticipated. Melico sings this evening for the last time, it would be dreadful to miss such an opportunity. In any case, by accepting my offer you will cause me no inconvenience at all, because I am going to the opera myself. It is merely a question of allowing me to accompany you.'

It would have been ungracious of Lady Stralson to refuse Granwell, nor did she. On arrival at the Hotel Poland, Williams was awaiting the ladies. Gave was not due to begin his role until the next day, although he had arrived that same day at the hotel. He was therefore not yet with Williams, and our young man was alone when his friends arrived. He received them as well as he could and overwhelmed Granwell with courtesies and gratitude, but as time was short they hastened to the Opera. Williams gave Lady Stralson his arm, an arrangement Granwell anticipated and which gave him the chance to

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entertain the younger woman, in whom he discovered an infinite wit, a fastidious taste, and a most extensive knowledge, everything in fact that he might have had some difficulty in finding in a young girl of the highest rank who had never left the capital.

After the performance, Granwell took the two ladies back to Cecil Street, and Lady Stralson having no occasion for anything but praise where he was concerned invited him to meet her cousin. Lady Wately knew Granwell only slightly and received him with extreme hospitality, nevertheless. She invited him to supper with them but the nobleman, too skilful to throw himself too soon at their heads, invented some important business, and withdrew, more infatuated than ever before.

A character like Granwell's lacks normal patience and becomes angered at difficulties. But those which cannot be overcome extinguish the passions of such a soul instead of inflaming them. Since such types of individuals must be perpetually fed with distractions, the object would undoubtedly change if the idea of triumph crumbled hopelessly.

Granwell saw clearly that while striving to separate Williams from his beloved, it might be a long process; he must in addition therefore endeavour to set Henrietta at variance with her mother, in the certain knowledge that he would never achieve his plans while the two were together. Once he was introduced into Lady Wately's house it seemed to him impossible that with the additional aid of his agents Henrietta could take any step that would enable her to escape him. And so he devoted all his time to this new project of disunion.

Three days after the adventure of the Opera, Granwell went to inquire after the health of the ladies, but was astonished when he saw Lady Stralson come alone to the parlour to explain on behalf of her cousin that it was not possible to invite him up; she made the excuse of her kinswoman's health. Granwell, although irritated by this, did not allow himself to show any less interest in the welfare of the lady of the house, but could not restrain himself from asking news of Henrietta. Lady Stralson replied that she had been somewhat shaken by the

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accident and had kept to her room since the other day. After a few minutes his lordship asked permission to come again, and departed, highly discontented with his day.

Gave, however, had already made Williams' acquaintance, and on the day following Granwell's unsuccessful visit to Lady Wately's came to give an account of his activities.

'I have made more progress than you would believe, my lord,' he said to Granwell. 'I have seen both Williams and the very men responsible for his affairs. There is every possibility of upsetting this inheritance he is expecting, which is the entire fortune he can offer Henrietta. There is another, much closer relative living in Hereford, who is unaware of his rights. We must write to this man inviting him to come at once, take charge of him when he arrives, and secure the inheritance for him. Meanwhile I shall drain dry the purse of this insolent puppy who dares to set himself up as your rival. He has attached himself to me with frankness entirely in keeping with his age, already confided the story of his love, and even spoken of you and your good graces towards his mistress the other day. He is ours, I assure you. Make me alone responsible for the task and I will promise that we have him in our hands.'

'This news is some consolation for yesterday's rebuff,' said his lordship, and he told his friend of his reception at Lady Wately's. 'Gave,' he continued, 'my love overwhelms me. All this will take so long, I cannot possibly restrain much longer my violent desires to have this girl. . . . Listen, my friend, I have a new plan. Listen, and do it straight away. Let Williams see how great is your interest in meeting the girl he worships, and since it is impossible for you to call upon a woman that you do not know, get him to invent an illness. He must then urgently beg her to hire a chair and come at once to him. Work on that, Gave, work on it, without neglecting everything else, and leave me to follow up your activities'.

Gave was the cleverest scoundrel in England, and his enterprise was successful. Without losing sight of the larger project, in fact while writing to Squire Clark, the second heir of Williams' aunt, inviting him at once to London, he obtained

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permission from his friend to see Henrietta; in the exact manner proposed by Granwell, Miss Stralson was informed of her lover's indisposition. She replied that she would use the excuse of making several purchases to find a chance to visit him. Almost at the same moment, his lordship heard from two sources that the following Tuesday, at four in the afternoon, Miss Henrietta would travel alone by chaise to Covent Garden.

'Oh idol of my life,' cried Granwell, entranced by joy, 'you shall not escape me this time. However violent must be the means by which I get you, the consolation of possessing you will prevent remorse on my part. Remorse! Can a heart like mine know the meaning of such emotion? It has long been eradicated from my hardened soul by the practice of evil. You host of other beauties, seduced like Henrietta. . . deceived like her, abandoned like her. . . Tell her whether I was moved by your tears, intimidated by your struggles, melted by your shame. . . and how long could your attractions hold me! Ah well! It is just one more name to add to the list of illustrious victims of my debauchery. What use is there for women. . . Oh Henrietta! What am I saying? A single glance from your eyes of fire would destroy my whole philosophy, and I would fall at your feet, perhaps, even while I swear to outrage you. . . Who? I! Should I know love! . . . Hence, vulgar sentiment, away. . . If there were a woman in this world who could make me feel love, I would rather, I think, blow out her brains, than submit to her infernal artifice. No, no, weak deceitful sex, no hope of ever capturing me. I have enjoyed your pleasures too often to be still impressed by them. It is by angering the god that we learn how to break open the temple, and if we wish to destroy the cult we cannot inflict too many indignities'.

After these reflections well worthy of such a blackguard as himself, Granwell sent men at once to hire every chaise in the vicinity of Cecil Street. His servants were posted at every crossroads to prevent any chaise in search of a master from approaching Lady Wately's residence. One of his own chairs, managed by two porters he could trust, was sent with orders to conduct Henrietta, once they had her, to the home, near St.

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James's Park, of a certain Madame Schmit, who for the last twenty years had been devoted to the secret adventures of Granwell, and whom he had been careful to warn. Henrietta, wrapped in a cloak, without any worries or doubts of the loyalties of the public servants she imagined she was using, got into the chaise that presented itself. She gave orders to be taken to the Hotel Poland, and not knowing any of the streets, was completely without suspicion during any moment of the journey. She arrived where Granwell was waiting for her. The porters, well instructed, went right into the alley belonging to the Schmit house, straight up to the door of a low room. The door was opened. . . and how surprised was Henrietta to find herself in a strange house! With a little scream she threw herself back, saying to the chairmen that they had not brought her where she ordered. . . .

'Miss Stralson,' said Granwell, coming forward at once, 'I am deeply indebted to Heaven that I am allowed a second chance to be of service to you. I understand from what you say and what I can see of your chairmen that they are drunk and also that they have made a mistake. Isn't it fortunate, in the circumstances, that this slight accident should happen to you at the house of a relative of mine, Lady Edward? If you will take the trouble to come in, Miss Stralson, you can dismiss these ruffians with whom your life is insecure, and my cousin's servants shall find some safer people for you!'

It was difficult to refuse such a proposition. Henrietta had only seen his lordship once before, and had no cause to complain of him; she met him at the entrance to a house the apartments of which suggested nothing but respectability. Supposing there were any danger in accepting the proposal, there was surely more in remaining in the hands of these drunken fellows who, angered by Henrietta's reproaches, proposed to leave her there! She entered therefore with profuse apologies to Granwell. His lordship himself dismissed the chairmen, and appeared to give orders to some servants to call new ones. Miss Stralson was led on into the apartments by the mistress of the house, and when she had arrived the so-called lady bowed,

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and said to Granwell in an insolent manner, 'I wish you much pleasure, milord. I couldn't have found you a prettier one'. At this Henrietta shuddered, it seemed as if all her strength would leave her. She understood the full horror of her position, but had strength enough to hold onto herself—her safety depended upon it. She summoned all her courage.

'What do you mean by that, madam?' she said, seizing Schmit by the arm, 'and for whom do you take me?'

'For a charming girl, miss,' answered Granwell, 'for an angelic creature, who, in a moment, I hope, will make me the most fortunate of men, the most amorous of lovers'.

'My lord,' said Henrietta, without releasing Schmit, 'I can see that my imprudence has placed me at your mercy, but I call upon your sense of justice. If you abuse my position, if you force me to hate you, you will surely not gain as much as you would by the feelings you had already aroused in me'.

'You are a clever woman, but neither your bewitching face nor the incomparable art which inspires you at this moment can seduce me. You do not love me, nor will you know how to love me. I lay no claim to your love, I know who it is who sets your heart on fire, and I count myself more fortunate than him: he has only a frivolous sentiment, that I shall never have from you. But I have your exquisite person which shall soon drown my senses in ecstasy.'

'Stop, my lord, you are deceived. I am not Williams' mistress! I was promised to him without the consent of my heart. My heart is free, and could love you as well as any other; it will certainly hate you if you seek to gain by force what it only depends on you to gain by merit.'

'You do not love Williams? Why then are you visiting him, if you love him not? Do you think I do not know that you were only going to him because you believe him to be ill?'

'That may be, but I would not have been if my mother had not wished it. Understand that I have done no more than obey. . .'

'Artful creature!'

'Oh my lord, give in to that feeling which I believe I read at this moment in your eyes. Be generous, Granwell, do not force me to hate you, when you can, if you wish, have my esteem.'

'Your esteem?'

'Merciful heavens, would you prefer hate?'

'Only a more ardent emotion could make me have pity on you!'

'Are you so ignorant of a woman's heart that you do not know what can grow from gratitude? Release me, my lord, and one day you will see whether Henrietta is ungrateful, whether or not she deserved your pity.'

'Who? I! I have pity, pity for a woman?' said Granwell, separating her from Schmit. 'Should I lose the most beautiful opportunity of my life, deprive myself of the greatest of pleasures, to spare you a moment of pain! And why should I do it? Come closer, siren, closer. I will not listen to you any more.' As he spoke he snatched away the kerchief that covered Henrietta's lovely breast, and flung it to the end of the room.

'Heaven have pity' cried the girl, throwing herself at his feet, 'let me not become the victim of a man who would force me to detest him. . . Have pity on me, my lord, have pity, I pray you. Let my tears soften you, let the voice of virtue be heard again in your heart. Do not destroy an unfortunate woman who has done you no harm, in whom you have already inspired gratitude, and whose feelings may not remain at that'.

With these words she knelt at his feet, her arms upraised to heaven. Tears flowed down her cheeks, flushed with fear and despair, and fell onto her bared bosom, a thousand times whiter than alabaster.

'Where am I?' cried Granwell, agitated. 'What inexpressible emotion is troubling every faculty of my being? Where have you acquired those eyes that so disarm me? Who has endowed you with that seductive voice, each note of which softens my heart? Are you an angel from heaven or merely a human creature? Tell me, who are you! I do not know myself, any more. I know neither what I want nor what I am doing.'

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All my faculties are annihilated in your being, they can express no more than your prayers. Stand up. Stand up. Miss Stralson, it is I who should bow at the feet of the god that has enchained me. Stand up, your dominion is too well established. It is impossible, absolutely impossible, for any impure desire to overthrow its empire in my heart.' And, returning to her her kerchief, 'Here, hide from me those charms that impassion me. I need nothing to increase the delirium in which so much attraction has plunged me'.

'Oh, sublime man!' cried Henrietta, clasping his hand. 'What do you not deserve for so generous an action?'

'I wish to desire your heart madam, that is the only prize I aim at, the only triumph worthy of me. Remember eternally that I was master of your person, and did not abuse it, and if this does not win for me those affections I demand of it, remember I shall have the right to avenge myself, and in a soul like mine vengeance is a terrible emotion. Sit down, madam, and listen. . . You have given me hope, Henrietta, you have said you do not love Williams, you have let me think you might be able to love me. . . Those are the motives which stopped me, those to which you owe your victory. I prefer to deserve of you what I need only have seized. Do not make me repent this virtue; do not force me to say that the perfidy of men is due only to the fickleness of women, and that if they deserve it, we, in our turn, shall be unceasingly what they desire.'

'My lord, you cannot possibly blind yourself to the fact that in this unfortunate incident the first wrong is on your side. By what right have you sought to disturb my peace? Why did you have me brought into a strange house, when I had entrusted myself to public servants, in the belief that they would take me where I ordered? In the light of this knowledge, is it for you to make laws for me? Do you not owe me apologies, instead of imposing conditions?' (and then, seeing Granwell express dissatisfaction, she continued with spirit) 'Nevertheless, let me explain myself, my lord. You have made good this first wrong, which, if you wish, the love you claim to feel excuses, by the noblest, most generous of sacrifices. Certainly I owe you

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gratitude; that I have promised, I shall not break my word. Visit my parents' house, my lord, I will induce them to treat you as you deserve. The habit of seeing you will strengthen every day those feelings of gratitude you have sown in my heart. Take hope from that, you would misjudge me if I promised more.'

'But how shall you explain this incident to your friends?'

'As it should be, as a porters' blunder which by a singular stroke of fortune put me a second time into the hands of one who has already been of service to me and who benefitted from that chance to serve me again.'

'And do you assure me that you do not love Williams?'

'It is impossible for me to hate a man who has never meant me anything but good. I do not doubt he loves me, but the choice was my mother's, and nothing hinders me from revoking it.' She rose, and continued, 'May I entreat you to call some porters for me. A longer interview may arouse suspicion and perhaps affect what I have to say. Dismiss me now and do not delay in visiting her whom your kindness fills with gratitude, and who forgives your barbarous design by reason of the wise and virtuous manner in which you wish to make her forget it'.

'Cruel girl,' said Granwell, also rising, 'yes, I shall obey you. . .but I rely upon your heart, Henrietta, I count on it. . . Remember that passions which are deceived will prompt me to despair. I will use your own words. Do not force me to detest you. There would have been little danger in the hate you would have felt on my account—there will be enormous peril in the hate you may reduce me to on your account'.

'No, my lord, no, never will I make you hate me. I have more pride than you imagine, and I shall always know how to preserve my right to your esteem.'

At this Granwell called for porters—there were many close by—and when they were announced, he took Henrietta's hand.

'Angelic girl, do not forget you have achieved a victory to which no other woman but yourself would have dared aspire, a triumph that you owe only to the emotions you inspire in me; if ever you deceive those sentiments, they will be replaced

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by all the crimes that vengeance can evoke.'

'Goodbye, my lord,' said Henrietta as she entered the chaise, 'never repent of a good action. Always believe that heaven and all just souls will reward you for it'.

Granwell returned home in an indescribable agitation, and Henrietta to her mother in such a condition that everyone thought she was about to faint.

Reflection upon Miss Stralson's behaviour would discern without doubt or difficulty that every word she had spoken to Granwell was prompted only by ingenuity and policy. She believed such ruses, so foreign to her naïve soul, to be justified in order that she might escape the dangers threatening her. We do not believe that in acting thus this interesting creature is likely to be blamed by anyone; the most refined virtue is sometimes constrained to some lapses. Once home, with no further cause for deception, she gave a full account of what had happened, disguising neither what she had said in order to escape, nor the promises she had been forced to make to the same end. Except for the indiscretion of venturing out alone, there was no disapproval of anything she had done, but her friends were opposed to honouring the promises she had given. It was decided that Miss Stralson would avoid Lord Granwell on every occasion with the greatest care, and that Lady Wately's door would be most firmly shut to his insolent advances. Henrietta thought she must maintain that such a mode of action would vastly infuriate a man whose desperation could be most fatal, and that, if he had committed a fault, he had redeemed it like a gentleman, and that it would be better therefore to receive him than to annoy him. She thought she could answer also for Williams' opinion on this, but her two relatives would not be moved from theirs, and orders were given accordingly.

Meanwhile Williams, who had waited for his mistress all the evening, was impatient when she did not come. Leaving Squire O'Donel, the name given by Gave on arrival at the Hotel Poland, he reached Lady Wately's an hour after Henrietta's return. She sobbed when she saw him, took his hand and

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said with tenderness, 'How little was needed to make me no longer worthy of you!' and as she was free to speak, as much as she wished, alone with a man whom her mother already regarded as a son-in-law, they were left to discuss together all that had just happened.

'Oh!' cried Williams, when he had learnt the whole story, 'it was on my account you were about to be dishonoured, to give me a moment's satisfaction you almost became the unhappiest of creatures. Yes, for a caprice; I must confess, I was not ill. A friend wished to meet you, and I wished to enjoy before his eyes the blessedness of possessing the affection of so beautiful a woman. That is the whole mystery, Henrietta. You see that I am doubly to blame'.

'Let us go no further, my friend,' replied Miss Stralson, 'I have found you again, all is forgotten. But you must agree Williams', she continued, while her eyes conveyed to the heart of her adored the gentle flame of love, 'that I should never have seen you again, if this disaster had befallen me. You would not have wanted the victim of such a man, and I would have had, in addition to my own sorrow, the despair of losing all'.

'Do not think that, Henrietta,' answered Williams, 'there is nothing that is dearest to me in this world which can prevent you being precious to him who would stake all his honour to possess you. You, whom I will adore until my dying breath, be assured that the sentiments you inspire are far above all mortal happenings, and it is as impossible for me not to cherish them, as it is for you ever to be unworthy of them'.

After this the two lovers discussed the catastrophe in a more cool-headed fashion. They knew Lord Granwell for a most dangerous enemy who would only be embittered by the strategy proposed. But there was no way to change it the women would not hear of it. Williams spoke about his new friend, and the frankness and security of these creatures were such that it never occurred to them to suspect that the false Scot was only one of milord's agents; far from that, indeed, Williams' praises inspired Henrietta with the desire to know him, and

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the satisfaction that he was a good acquaintance. . .

'By hell and all its furies!' said his lordship to Gave the next day, 'I am unfit to breathe, my friend, I am a mere school-boy, a mere dunderhead, I tell you. I had her in my arms. . . saw her at my feet, and had not the courage to submit her to my desires. . . I dared not humiliate her, my friend, she is not a woman, but part of the divinity itself, come to earth to waken in my soul virtuous sentiments that I have never imagined in all my life. She let me think she might perhaps one day love me and I, I who have only believed the love of a woman to be a trifle in the enjoyment of her, renounced this certain enjoyment for an imaginary sentiment that harrows me and troubles me that I may not experience it again'.

Gave reproached milord soundly, awakening his fear of being the plaything of a young girl, and assured him that such an opportunity might not occur again for a long time, now that they were on their guard.

'Yes, remember, milord,' he added, 'you will have cause to regret this mistake you have made, and your indulgence will cost you dear. Should a man like you let himself become tender-hearted over a few tears and two beautiful eyes? Will this confused situation in which your heart has become entangled give you the same amount of voluptuousness as the stoic indifference you swore never to depart from? You will be sorry for your pity, milord, I tell you, you will be sorry'.

'We shall soon know,' said milord. 'I shall call upon Lady Wately tomorrow without fail. I shall study this wily miss, Gave, examine her, and read her feelings in her eyes. If she is deceiving me, I shan't lack stratagems to snare her with again, and she won't always have the magic art of escaping me as she has already done. As for you, Gave, continue with the ruin of this blockhead Williams. When Clark appears send him to Sir James, I will forewarn him to advise Clark to pursue this inheritance which is being snatched from him. We will look after him with the judges. We can break off all arrangements if we are certain that my angel loves me, and press them hard if the infernal creature has cheated me. . . But, I must say it

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again, I'm an absolute baby, I shall never forgive myself for this last stupidity. Keep my failure from my friends, Gave, cover it up carefully, or they will overwhelm me with reproaches which I thoroughly deserve.'

They parted, and the next day, that is, the third day after the Schmit adventure, Granwell presented himself at Lady Wately's in all his opulence and magnificence.

The women had not changed their resolution in anything. He was cruelly refused. To his insistence that he must see Lady Stralson and her daughter' on affairs of the greatest importance the answer was that the ladies he was seeking were no longer at the house. He came away furious. His first instinct was to seek out Williams, impress him with the service he had rendered to his mistress, telling him the story agreed upon with Henrietta at Schmit's, and insist that he accompany him to Lady Stralson, or to cut both their throats if his rival did not fall in with his plans. But this project did not seem wicked enough to Granwell. His grievance was on'y with Miss Stralson; probably she had not told her family the story as promised. It was to her alone he owed the snubs he had received; her alone he would track down and punish, and to that purpose alone he would apply himself.

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(The Stralsons' precautions did not include restricting either their business or pleasure trips around London. They went about as much as before, accompanied by Lady Wately, now recovered. Granwell kept track of them through his spies, but a month passed before an opportunity occurred for vengeance. A visit by the Stralsons to see Garrick's last appearance in Hamlet at Drury Lane gave Granwell his chance. He schemed to have Henrietta arrested at the play and imprisoned in the Bridewell, the prostitutes' jail. He gave information to the magistrates that a notorious Irish courtesan named Nancy who was wanted for theft and other misdemeanours had imposed herself upon Lady Wately as a lady of quality and would be at Drury lane with her that night. The plan misfired at the theatre because the women were accompanied by an eminent member of Parliament, Lord Barwill, who sent the constables away and himself took the Stralsons to Judge Fielding, where

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the innocence of Henrietta was soon revealed. Granwell managed to convince Judge Fielding the next day that he had made a mistake in good faith, and went back to plot new villainies. Meanwhile Gave had almost reduced Williams to poverty, and the claim of Clark in the lawsuit was being most vigorously and skilfully advanced by Sir James with Granwell well in the background. The two women suspected Granwell's influence and foresaw Clark's triumph, but were both determined that Henrietta should marry Williams, whatever happened. Granwell's next move was prompted by Lady Wately's decision to take her cousins to her country estate near Newmarket for a rest from the trials of London. He kidnapped Henrietta just outside Newmarket in a forest notorious for its murders, and brought her back to his London house.)

. . . . he dismissed his men and unmasked himself.

'Now, traitress,' he said with fury, 'do you recognise the man you have dared with impunity to betray?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered Henrietta bravely, 'whenever any misfortune occurs, can I not name you on the spot? You are the sole cause of all my sufferings, your only enjoyment is to harry me. Were I your deadliest enemy, you could not treat me differently.'

'Cruel woman, is it not you then who make me the most wretched of men, abusing my good faith, and by your infamous duplicity making me the dupe of those feelings I cherished for you?'

'I thought you were more just, my lord, I imagined that before condemning people you would condescend at least to hear them.'

'I let myself be caught a second time by your damnable tricks?'

'Unhappy Henrietta, you will be punished then for too much frankness and credulity, and the one man in all the world you have singled out will be the cause of all the disasters in your life.'

'What do you mean, miss? Explain yourself. I will willingly hear your defence again, but do not flatter yourself you will deceive me. Don't imagine you can abuse this fatal love of mine that I ought to blush for. No, miss, I shall not be duped

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again you interest me no more, Henrietta I can see you dispassionately now, and the only longings that you stir in me are for crime and vengeance'

'Gently, my lord, you accuse me all too lightly. A woman wishing to deceive you, would have welcomed you, encouraged your hopes, sought to disarm you, and with the subtlety you credit me with, would have succeeded. See how different was my behaviour, and when you find in it my motive condemn me if you dare.'

'What! At our last meeting you let me think you were not indifferent to me. You invited me yourself to call upon you. That was the reward for my mercy, the condition under which I let my heart be ruled by restraint rather than those emotions which I see you hold against me. And when I had done everything to please you, sacrificed all to win a heart that would have meant nothing to me had I listened only to my desires, then I am rewarded by seeing your door shut in my face. No, no, faithless one do not hope to escape me again, do not expect that Your efforts will be in vain.'

'Do with me what you will, my lord. I am in your hands' (shedding a few involuntary tears) 'You have bought me at the cost of my mother's life without a doubt. But what does that matter, do with me what you will, I say. I will not defend myself against you but if it were possible for you to listen to the truth without accusations of deceit, my lord, I would ask you if the rebuffs you have suffered are not sure proof of my admission of the feelings you have inspired in me, and the fear in which their power over me is held? Would there have been any need to deny you, if they were not afraid of you, and would they have feared you unless I had openly avowed my feelings for you? Have your revenge my lord, take it, punish me for abandoning myself to so bewitching an error. I deserve all your anger you cannot make it heavy enough or inflict it too violently.'

'So!' said Granwell, unbelievably agitated, 'did I not fore see that this deceitful creature would try to capture me again. Oh! No! no! you are not to blame, miss, the faults are all

mine I am the only guilty one, I who should be punished I must surely be a monster to conspire against her who adores me from the depths of her soul I did not see it, I did not know that Forgive me for the extreme humility of my character How could I have nourished the conceit of ever being loved by such a girl as you?’

‘Allow me, my lord, to say, that this is not time for sarcasm or jokes, neither from you or from me You are making me the most miserable of women, and I was far from desiring you to be the most unfortunate of men That is all I have to tell you, my lord It is plain you do not believe it Allow me in my turn to have sufficient pride, humiliated though I am, not to seek to convince you It is cruel enough for me to have to blush before my family and friends for the mistake I have made, without having to weep for it again with him who made me make it Do not believe a word I say, my lord, it is all deceit I am the most false of all women You must not think of me in any other way Do not believe me, please

‘But if it were true that your feelings for me were such as you would make them out, what prevented you, when you could not see me, from writing to me Ought not you to have imagined how upset I was by the snub I had received?’

‘I am not my own mistress, my lord, never forget that, and you will agree that a girl of my age, whose feelings must depend upon her upbringing, must always strive to suppress within her heart anything her family disapproves of’

‘And now that you no longer depend upon this barbarous family, which opposes your own wishes as well as mine, do you consent to give me your hand immediately?’

‘Who? I? When my mother is perhaps dying, and it was your hands which snatched me from her? Allow me to consider her, to whom I owe my life, before my own happiness’

‘Be reassured, miss, your mother is quite safe She is with Lady Wately, and they are both as well as you I gave orders for their safety as soon as you were carried off and they have been obeyed with even more intelligence than those which put you in my power Have no anxiety at all on that score, and

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do not let such worries affect the decision that I am asking you to give me. Will you accept my hand or not?’

‘Do you imagine I can answer such a question without my mother’s consent? It is not your mistress that I want to be, my lord, but your wife. Could I be that legally if I, dependent on my family, married you without their approval?’

‘Remember that I am the master of your person, miss, and that the slave has not the right to make conditions.’

‘Then I shall not marry you, my lord. I do not wish to be the slave of him who has my heart.’

‘Proud creature, shall I never succeed in humiliating you?’

‘And what pleasure will you enjoy from a triumph achieved over a slave? Can anything due to violence alone effect your self-esteem?’

‘It is not always certain that this much-vaunted virtue is quite as precious as women would believe!’

‘Leave such stony principles, my lord, to those unfit to deserve the hearts they try to conquer; such abominable maxims are not meant for you.’

‘But this Williams—I wish that every disaster Nature can inflict on man were heaped upon his villainous head.’

‘Do not talk like that of the most honest of all men.’

‘He has stolen your heart from me, he is the cause of it all. I know you love him.’

‘I have already answered you on that count, and I will say it again. Williams is in love with me, that is all. Oh, my lord, if you never have any more dangerous obstacle to your ambitions, you will not be so unlucky as you imagine.’

‘No, siren, no! I do not believe you.’ He went on, with emotion, ‘Come, prepare yourself. I have given you time enough for reflection. You may well suppose that it was not to become your dupe again that I brought you here. From tonight you shall be either my wife or my mistress. . . .’ With these words the barbarian seized her roughly by the arms, and dragged her towards the impious altar on which he meant to sacrifice her.

‘One word, my lord,’ said Henrietta, fighting back her tears, and resisting Granwell’s endeavours with all her strength, ‘one

word I beg of you. What do you hope from this crime you are about to commit?’

‘All the pleasures it can give me.’

‘You will only enjoy them for one day, my lord: tomorrow I shall no longer be either your slave or your mistress: all that your eyes will see tomorrow will be the corpse of the girl you have dishonoured. Oh Granwell! you do not understand my character, you do not know the lengths to which I can go. If you then have in truth the slightest feeling for me, will you purchase (at the price of my destruction) a few minutes’ miserable enjoyment? The very pleasures that you wish to steal I offer you. Why not accept them from my heart? You are a just and sensitive man,’ she continued, almost on her knees, and stretching out her clasped hands towards her tyrant, ‘let yourself be moved by my tears, let my cries of despair once again enter your heart, you will not repent hearing them. Oh! My lord! you see before you as suppliant her whose whole glory was to see you one day kneeling at her feet. You want me for your wife. Then look on me already as that, and do not, on that account, dishonour her whose destiny is linked so intimately with yours. Let Henrietta return to her mother, that is her prayer, and she will repay your kindnesses with the warmest liveliest affections’.

But Granwell was no longer looking at her. He strode up and down the room, burning with love. . . tormented by lascivious thirst. . . gnawed by desire for revenge. . . and harassed by the pity born of love that this gentle voice, this interesting pose, these floods of tears, excited in his heart, despite himself. Ready at times to seize her, at others to forgive her, it was impossible to say to which of these two moods he would surrender, when Henrietta, seizing upon his indecision, said, ‘Come, my lord, see if I intend to deceive you. Take me yourself to my mother, ask her for my hand, and see if I will submit to your desires’.

‘Incomprehensible girl,’ said the lord. ‘Very well then, for the second time I yield to you. But if, unfortunately, you should abuse my faith again, there is no human force that can shield you from the effects of my vengeance.’ . . . It will be terrible,

remember this, it will be paid for with the blood of those most dear to you. There will not be a single one of those around you will not lie at your feet, crushed by my hand.'

'I will submit to everything, my Lord. Let us go. Leave me no longer in my anxiety about my mother. My happiness lacks only her consent, and the knowledge of her safety, and then your longings shall be satisfied immediately.'

Milord called for his horses. 'I shall not come with you,' he said to Henrietta. 'I would not choose this moment to appear among your friends. See what confidence I have in you. Tomorrow, on the stroke of noon, I shall send a carriage to meet you and your mother; you will come to my house, be welcomed by my family, meet my lawyers, and I shall become your husband that same day. But do not forget, miss, if I suspect even the slightest show of refusal on your part, you will have no deadlier enemy in London than I. Go, the carriage is waiting, I shall not even see you to the door. I cannot be rid too soon of those looks which have so strong an effect upon my heart, in the same instant impelling me to crime and inspiring me with virtue.'

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(At home again, Henrietta found that when the carriage was attacked two servants had been almost killed, and both the ladies injured. Granwell however had done as he said, and the moment Henrietta had been captured the bandits had assisted the remainder back to London. Lady Stralson, more concerned for Henrietta than her own sufferings, had been about to take desperate measures when her daughter returned. Discussing Granwell's ultimatum, Lady Stralson's first instinct was to flee at once to Hereford. She was afraid however that her daughter would not be safe even there, and finally plumped for the marriage, which would be a very good one, after all. But Henrietta would rather die than marry so odious a man. At last they agreed to play for time, until she could wed Williams secretly and escape to Hereford, where her status as a married woman would entitle her to the full protection of the law, should Granwell pursue her there. Next day she wrote to Granwell that her mother's illness made marriage impossible for the moment. He should not despair, however, but visit them and console her for the delay. Granwell went, full of anger and

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suspecting treachery; the visit passed off politely and he reluctantly gave Henrietta another day in which to keep her promise. He decided meanwhile to intensify the campaign against Williams. This was completely successful. Gave had reduced Williams to his last four guineas, and the wretched man was about to confess his faults to Henrietta when his case, thanks to Granwell's activities, was suddenly decided in favour of Clark. Determined to kill himself, Williams had to see Henrietta for the last time. Writing her secretly by night, to avoid being seen by Granwell's spies, he told her of the verdict and also of his gambling losses.)

'Oh! my dear Henrietta!' he cried, throwing himself at the feet of his beloved, 'I am making you my last farewells. I have come to release you from your ties, and to break those that hold me to this life. Take care of my rival, and do not refuse him your hand. He alone can make you happy now; my errors and my misfortunes do not permit me to be yours; become my rival's wife, it is your best friend who urges you. Forget forever a wretch who is no longer worthy of your pity'.

'Williams,' said Henrietta, assisting her lover to his feet, and holding him to her side, 'you whom I will never for one moment cease to adore, how can you believe that my affections are dependent on the vagaries of fortune? How unjust a creature I would be to stop loving you because of your mistakes or misfortunes? Believe also, Williams, that my mother would no more desert you than I. I will undertake the task of telling her the news; I want to spare you that sorry confession. But assure me of your life, swear to me, Williams, that so long as you are sure of Henrietta's love, no disaster can impel you to cut the thread of your existence'.

'Oh my beloved mistress, on my knees I swear it; what is more sacred to me than your love, what misfortune can I fear while my Henrietta still cherishes me? Yes, I will live, because you love me, but do not ask me to marry you, do not seek to link your destiny with that of a miserable wretch no longer worthy of you. Marry his lordship. If I cannot contemplate it without sorrow, I can at least bear it without jealousy, and the splendour with which this powerful man can endow you

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will console me, if it is possible, for not being able to aspire to the same happiness.'

It was not without tears that the gentle Henrietta heard these words, so distasteful to her that she could not let him finish. 'Unjust man,' she cried, clutching his hand, 'could I be happy knowing you were not, and could you be happy knowing I was in another's arms? No, my friend, no, I will never leave you. I have a further debt to discharge now, the debt imposed by your misfortune. Until now love alone bound me to you, today I am tied by duty. It is my duty to comfort you, Williams. From whom else would you value it, if not your Henrietta. Mine is the hand to wipe away your tears—why seek to rob me of this pleasure? If you had wed me with the fortune that you should have owned, you would have owed me nothing, my friend: now I hold you to me with the ties of love and with the tender bonds of gratitude'.

With his tears Williams bathed his lover's hands, and overcome with too great emotion could not find words with which to voice his feelings. Lady Stralson arrived as our two lovers, lost in each others arms, exchanged between their souls the divine fire that consumed them; her daughter told her then what Williams dared not say himself, and ended her account by begging her mother as a favour not to change in any way the affection she had always shown.

'Come, dear man,' said the good lady, placing her arms round Williams' neck, 'we loved you rich, we shall love you even better poor. Never forget your two good friends, and let them take on themselves the burden of consoling you. You have made mistakes, my friend, but you are young and independent, you will not make them any longer, when you are the husband of the girl you love'.

We will pass in silence over Williams' words of tenderness. He who has a heart will hear them without the need to speak them, and nothing can describe them to hearts which are cold.

'Oh, my dear daughter,' continued Lady Stralson, 'I am so afraid all this is some vile villainy of that dreadful man who

plagues us. This Scottish captain who brings our good Williams to ruin in so short a time, this Squire Clark whom we never knew as a relation of our good friend's aunt, they are all the evil doings of this wicked man. Oh! if only we had never come to London. We must leave this dangerous town, my daughter, we must keep away from it for ever'.

It is not hard to believe that Henrietta and Williams adopted this idea joyfully. A day was fixed; it was decided to leave the following day, but in such secrecy that even Lady Wately's servants would know nothing about it.

The next day Lord Granwell visited his love; in spite of all the efforts of Henrietta and her mother to behave naturally, he was too clever not to distinguish certain variations in their conduct, and too sharp not to attribute them to the revolution in Williams' prospects. He made enquiries, and although secrecy had been maintained around both the plan to leave and Williams' last visits it was impossible for nothing to have leaked out. With the aid of his wonderful spy service, it was not long before he knew all.

'Well,' he said to Gave, when he received the latest report, 'once again I am the dupe of this company of traitors. This faithless Henrietta plays with me but dreams only of enthroning my rival. False, deceiving sex, do not your sins daily justify the reproaches hurled against you? Oh, Gave, my friend, the ungrateful female does not know whom she is abusing. On her head alone I will avenge my whole sex. I will make her weep tears of blood, for her own sins, and for those of all like her. In your business with this knavish Williams, Gave, did you obtain any of his handwriting?'

'I have some here.'

'Good, give it to me. Take this letter at once to Johnson, the clever rogue can forge any writing. Tell him to copy this at once, to transcribe in Williams' hand the lines I shall dictate to you.'

Gave took them down and went to Johnson who copied them. At seven o'clock on the eve of her departure, Henrietta received, from the hand of a man who assured her that it was

from Williams, and that her unhappy lover was waiting most impatiently for her reply, the following letter:

'I am on the point of arrest for a debt much greater than I have money to pay. Without any doubt powerful enemies are involved in this. I may not even have time to give you a last embrace. I am waiting for this pleasure and for your advice. Come along to the corner of Kensington Gardens to comfort for a moment your luckless Williams, ready to die of grief if you refuse this favour.'

When she had read this note, Henrietta was in despair. Fearing that this further indiscretion might at last wear out her mother's kindness, she resolved to hide this new catastrophe from her, and with as much money as she could obtain to fly to Williams' aid. For a moment she considered the danger of going out at such an hour but what had she to fear from his lordship? She believed him to be completely humbugged by the deceptions of her mother and her friend Lady Wately. She and the two women had never stopped receiving him. Granwell himself had never appeared calmer. What was there to be afraid of, then? Perhaps he would take action against Williams, perhaps he was once again the cause of this new set-back; but the desire to harm a rival you still fear is no reason to threaten the liberty of her you can be sure of.

Weak, unhappy Henrietta, such were your foolish calculations! The love which prompted them justified them all; you did not consider that the veil before the eyes of lovers is never thicker than when the chasm is about to open at their feet. . . Miss Stralson sent for porters, and set off for the appointed place. The chaise drew up, the door opened. . . .

'Miss,' said Granwell, offering his hand to help her out, 'you weren't expecting me, I'm sure. I wager you're about to say that the scourge of your life is always appearing before your eyes—' Henrietta cried out, and tried to break away and run. 'Gently, my pretty angel, gently,' said Granwell, holding his pistol to her breast, and showing her she was surrounded. 'Do not hope to get away, no, not this time. I am tired of

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being your dupe, I intend to be revenged. Keep silent or I cannot answer for your life.'

Senseless, Henrietta was carried to a post-chaise. His lordship drove away with her, and raced non-stop to the north of England where he owned a vast isolated cartle on the Scottish border.

Gave remained at his lordship's London house, instructed to watch, and report by express couriers the latest news from London.

Two hours after her daughter's departure, Lady Stralson noticed her absence. Trusting in Henrietta's conduct, she was not worried at first, but when she heard ten strike, she shivered, suspecting some fresh trap. She flew to Williams and asked him tremblingly if he had not seen Henrietta. The unhappy lover's answer increased her fear. Telling Williams to wait she went to Lord Granwell, to be told that he was ill; she announced herself, certain that her name would admit her to his lordship. The answer was the same. She returned to Williams, doubly suspicious, and both of them, fearfully alarmed, went immediately to the Prime Minister, whom they knew to be related to Granwell. They recounted their misfortunes, attesting that the cruel tormenter of their lives, the sole cause of all their woes, in short, the ravisher of the one's daughter and the other's lover, was none other than Lord Granwell.

'Granwell!' The minister was shocked. 'But do you know that he is my friend, one of my relations, and whatever waywardness I might suspect him of, I still can't believe him capable of such horrors?'

'But he is, he is, my lord,' replied the grief-stricken mother. 'Investigate it, and you will see if we are deceiving you.'

A messenger was sent at once to his lordship's house, and Gave, not daring to deceive the agents of the Prime Minister, announced that Granwell had left to make a tour of his estates. This report, together with the suspicions and accusations of Henrietta's mother, opened the minister's eyes at last.

'Madam,' he said to Lady Stralson, 'go home with your friend, and calm yourself. I shall take action. You may be sure

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I shall neglect no opportunity to get back what you have lost and retrieve your family honour'.

But all these steps had taken time. The minister had not wished to undertake judicial action without first consulting the king, to whom Granwell was attached by his office, and these facts made it possible for Gave to send a messenger to his friend's castle, with the result that the events which remain to be told were able to take place without hindrance.

Granwell, on reaching his estate, in order to calm Miss Henrietta, made her agree to take a little rest, but was careful to put her in a room from which it was impossible to escape. Miss Stralson felt little desire to sleep in her cruel circumstances, but glad of the chance of several hours in peace, she had made no sort of sound which could create suspicion that she was awake, when Gave's courier arrived. From then on Granwell knew that if he wanted to succeed he must act quickly. He would flinch at nothing that could assure victory; however criminal it might be, he was resolved on anything that brought revenge and the enjoyment of his victim.

At worst, he told himself, he would marry her, and not appear in London again except as her husband, but in the present situation, according to the news from Gave, he saw there would be time for nothing unless he quelled the storm that was about to break over his head, and to do that, he swiftly realised, two steps were necessary, to calm down Lady Stralson, and to make certain of Williams. An abominable ruse, and an even more loathsome crime suggested themselves in turn, and Granwell, who counted no cost when it concerned the realisation of his desires, had no sooner formed these horrible projects than their execution became his only care. Ordering the courier to wait, he went to Henrietta. He began with the most insulting proposition, which Henrietta, as usual, skilfully evaded. This was what he wanted, to make her use all her guile, so that he might seem taken in again, and then to catch her in the same traps that she employed on him. Miss Stralson used every weapon to confute the schemes his lordship proposed; tears, prayers, love, all were opposed

without distinction, and Granwell, after many struggles, with the air at last of giving in, fell treacherously to his knees before her.

'Cruel girl,' he said, shedding counterfeit tears of repentance onto her hands, 'your ascendancy is all too clear, you triumph every time, and at last I must surrender, finally. It is finished now, miss. No longer will you see in me your persecutor, but your friend; more generous than you imagine, with you I shall attempt the utmost trials of courage and virtue. You know all that I would have the right to claim, to exact in the name of love, to gain by violence. Well, Henrietta, I renounce them all. Yes, I hope to make you value me, perhaps one day regret me. Knowing now that I have never been your dupe, your pretence was wasted, you love Williams. . . then miss, you shall receive him from my hand. At this price may I buy forgiveness for all the evils I have done? By giving you Williams, by making good the losses that his fortune has just suffered from my own, can I acquire some right to my dear Henrietta's heart? Will she still name me her most cruel enemy?'

'Oh generous benefactor!' cried the young woman, too ready to accept the chimerical comfort of that moment, 'what god has inspired these designs in you, and how do you deign to change so rapidly poor Henrietta's destiny? You ask what rights you will acquire to my heart? All the feeling of this that does not belong to the unfortunate Williams will be for ever yours. I shall be your friend, Granwell, your sister, your confidante. My only duty will be to please you, and as a unique favour I dare to ask if I may spend my life near to you, using each moment of it to convince you of my gratitude. . . . Ah! consider well, my lord. Is not the affection of a free heart preferable to that which you would have stolen? You would have only made a slave of her who will now become your dearest friend'.

'Oh miss, you shall be that sincere friend,' stammered Granwell. 'I have so much to make good on your account that even at the cost of the sacrifice I am making you I dare not

consider myself free of debt yet. I will expect everything from time and from my deeds.'

'What are you saying, my lord? How little do you know my soul! If insults anger it, repentance softens it accordingly, and I no longer remember the injuries caused by him who takes one single step to seek forgiveness for them.'

'Then let all be forgotten on both sides, and let me have the satisfaction myself of forging the ties that you desire so much.'

'Here!' replied Henrietta with a gesture of anxiety she was unable to control. 'I thought, my lord, we would return to London.'

'No, my dear lady, no. By my honour, I shall not take you back except as the bride of my rival to whom I relinquish you. In showing you I wish to teach all England how great a cost has been your victory to me. Do not oppose this plan, for it is at once my triumph and my tranquillity. Write to your mother not to worry, and tell Williams to come here. We shall celebrate the wedding at once, and return the following day.'

'What of my mother, my lord?'

'We will ask her consent. She is not likely to refuse it, and it shall be Lady Williams who will repay her favours.'

'I am yours to command, my lord. Is it for me, so full of gratitude and tenderness, to choose the ways in which you condescend to work for my happiness? As you will, my lord, I agree to everything. So sincere in the affection that I owe you, so taken up with feeling and describing it, I forget everything that can distract me from that pleasure.'

'But you must write to Williams, miss.'

'To Williams?'

'And your mother. Could any words of mine persuade her as yours will?'

A servant brought all she required and Miss Henrietta wrote the two following letters:

Miss Henrietta to Williams

'Let us both fall at the feet of the most generous of men. Come, help me prove the gratitude that we two owe him. No

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sacrifice was ever nobler, ever made so gracefully or so completely. Lord Granwell wishes to unite us himself, Williams, his hand will bind our hearts—Hurry—Embrace my mother, obtain her consent, and tell her that her daughter will soon have the pleasure of holding her in her arms.'

The same to her mother

'The moment of most awful anxiety is followed by the gentlest calm: Williams will show you my letter. Oh most adored of mothers, I beg you not to oppose either your daughter's happiness, or Lord Granwell's intentions, they are as pure as his heart. Farewell, and forgive your daughter if, overcome with gratitude, she can hardly express to you her burning affection for the best of mothers.'

To these letters Granwell added two assuring Williams and Lady Stralson of his happiness in reuniting two people whose mutual tender friend he would become, and telling Williams to receive from his lawyer in London ten thousand guineas that he begged him accept as a wedding present. These letters were full of kindness, so stamped with frankness and ingenuity they could not fail to be believed. At the same time he wrote to Gave and his friends to allay all rumours, pacify the minister and announce that London would soon see how he made good his faults. The courier departed with his despatches. Granwell gave all his time to overwhelming Miss Stralson with his good attentions, in order, as he said, to do his best to make her forget the crimes towards her with which he had to reproach himself. . . and in the depths of his soul the monster exulted that at last his tricks had triumphed over her who for so long had enchained him with her own.

The messenger from Henrietta's kidnapper arrived in London just as the King was advising the Prime Minister to use all judicial means against Granwell. But Lady Stralson, completely deceived by the letters she received, believing in their contents all the more because she was so accustomed to Henrietta's victories over Granwell, flew at once to the minister, recounted what had passed, and begged him not to pursue his lordship. Everyone was pacified and Williams prepared to leave.

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'Master this powerful and dangerous man,' said Lady Stralson, as she embraced him, 'enjoy the triumphs that my daughter has won over him, and come back promptly both of you to comfort your adoring mother'.

Williams left, but without taking the superb present Granwell offered him; he did not even condescend to find out if it awaited him or not. Such an action would have had the appearance of doubt, and these brave and honest folk were far from feeling any. Williams arrived—Almighty God!—he arrived. . . and my pen is silent, refusing to relate the horrors that awaited this unhappy ^{lover}. Oh furies of hell, come, lend me your serpents! It must be with their glittering fangs that my hand inscribes the horrors which remain for me to tell.

'My dear Henrietta,' said Granwell in the morning, entering his captive's room with an air of happiness and joy, 'come and enjoy the surprise that I have carefully prepared for you. Hurry, dear miss, I want you to meet Williams at the foot of that same altar where he shall receive your hand. Follow me, miss, he awaits you.'

'He, my lord—he—Almighty God!—Williams—at the altar—and it is to you I owe this—Oh, my lord, let me fall at your feet—the feelings you inspire in me have overcome all others today.' (Granwell was disturbed.)

'No, no, miss, I cannot yet enjoy this gratitude, this is the last moment when I must shed my heart's blood for it; do not offer it yet, miss, it will only torture me for one day longer. Tomorrow I can sip it at my ease. Let's hurry, Henrietta. Don't let us keep the man who adores you, and burns to be united with you waiting any longer.'

Henrietta went forward, greatly troubled, greatly agitated, hardly able to breathe, the roses of her cheeks never more vivid. . . Inspired by love and hope, the dear girl thought that happiness was in her grasp. They reached the end of a vast gallery that joined the castle chapel. . . Oh merciful heaven! what sight is this. The sacred spot was hung with black, and upon a sort of bier, surrounded with burning candles lay Williams' body, pierced^d by thirteen daggers, the blood still

flowing from the wounds that they had opened.

'There is your lover, perfidious woman! See how my vengeance offers him to your unworthy vows.'

'Traitor!' screamed Henrietta, summoning all her strength not to succumb at this moment so terrible for her 'Ah' you have not deceived me. All the extremes of crime must make part of your ferocious soul, only virtue in it could surprise me. Let me die here, monster, it is the last favour that I ask of you.'

'I shall not grant that favour yet,' said Granwell, with that icy firmness which is the unique quality common to great villains, 'my vengeance is but half appeased, the rest must still be satisfied. At that altar you shall make your vows, there I shall hear you swear that you belong to me for ever'.

Granwell meant to be obeyed. Henrietta, brave enough to endure this appalling crisis, her energy rekindled by the desire for revenge, held back her tears, and promised everything.

'Miss,' said Granwell, when he was satisfied, 'believe now what I am about to say. All my longings for revenge are dead, my only thought is to make good my crimes. Follow me, miss, let's leave this mournful show. Everything is ready for us at the temple, the ministers of Heaven and the people have long anticipated our arrival. Come and accept my hand there. You will allot this night to the first duties of a wife. Tomorrow I shall take you publicly back to London, and present you to your mother as my wife'.

Casting wild glances at Granwell, Henrietta felt certain that she was not being deceived this time, but her stricken heart could no longer be consoled, harrowed by despair, devoured by the desire for revenge, she was incapable of other feelings.

'My lord,' she said, with the most courageous calm, 'I have so great a confidence in this unexpected return, that I am willing to accord you with good grace what you could take by force. Although our union has not been legalised by Heaven, none the less, tonight I will fulfil the duties you demand. Therefore I beg you to put off the ceremony until we are in

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London. I am loath to have it anywhere without my mother's presence. What does it matter, Granwell, since of my free will I submit myself to all your passions'.

Although Granwell really had desired to wed this girl, nevertheless it was with a sort of malicious joy he received her willingness to risk being deceived again. Foreseeing that her scruples would not be so great after a night's enjoyment, he readily agreed to all she asked. The remainder of the day passed calmly; even the sinister decorations were untouched, it being necessary that the darkest of night's shadows should preside over the burial of the hapless Williams.

'Granwell,' said Miss Stralson, when the time came to retire, 'I crave a new favour. After all that has passed this morning, shall I be able to control my shudders, seeing myself in the arms of my lover's murderer? Let no light illuminate the bed in which I offer you my troth. Do you not owe this deference to my chastity? Have I not acquired by wrongs enough the right to have what I request?'

'Order what you will, miss. I would have to be most unjust to refuse you such a thing. Too easily I understand the violence that you must do yourself, and with all my heart I permit whatever can diminish it.'

Henrietta bowed, and went to her room, while Granwell, enraptured by his infamous successes, silently congratulated himself on at last triumphing over his rival. He got into bed; the torches were removed. Henrietta was informed that she had been obeyed, and that she might, when it pleased her, enter the nuptial chamber. She did so, armed with a dagger that she had herself plucked from her lover's heart. . . . She approached. . . . With the excuse of feeling her way, she made certain with one hand of Granwell's body; with the other she rammed home the weapon that she carried, and the villain crumpled to the ground, blaspheming against Heaven and the hand that struck him down.

Henrietta hastened from the room. Trembling, she reached the mournful resting-place of Williams, a lamp in one hand,

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in the other the blood-smeared dagger that had served for her revenge.

'Williams,' she cried, 'crime separated us; the hand of God unites us once again. Receive my soul, thou whom I worshipped all my life, it shall be fused with thine, never to be put apart. . .'

With these words she stabbed herself, and fell quivering on the cold body on which her lips involuntarily pressed their final kisses.

These lugubrious tidings soon reached London. Granwell was little missed; his sins had long made him odious. Gave, fearing to be involved in this terrible occurrence, fled at once to Italy. Lady Stralson returned alone to Hereford. She never ceased to weep for the double loss she had just suffered, until the moment when the Everlasting, moved by her tears, bent down to take her again into His bosom, and reunite her, in a better world, with the persons, so loved and so worthy of that love, that had been wrenched from her by debauchery, revenge and cruelty, all crimes in the end that sprang from the abuse of wealth, trust and above all from forgetting the principles of honest men, without which neither we, nor all around us, can be happy on this earth.

AUGUSTIN DE VILLEBLANCHE

OR

LOVE'S STRATAGEM

'Of all the quirks of nature, that which has caused the most discussion, which has seemed the most strange to those demi-philosophers who wish to analyse everything without ever understanding anything, said Mademoiselle de Villeblanche, with whom we shall have occasion to entertain ourselves presently, to one of her best women friends one day, 'it is that bizarre taste that women of a certain physique or of a certain temperament have conceived for persons of their own sex. Although long before the immortal Sappho and ever since, there has not been a single country in the world not one solitary town which has not offered us women of this caprice, and although 're proofs of such strength it would seem more reasonable to accuse nature of a vagary than such women of a crime against nature, nevertheless we have never ceased to blame them. But for that imperious ascendancy that our sex has always had, who knows if some Cujas, Bartole, or Louis IX, might not have dreamed of punishing these unfortunate sensitive creatures with the stake as they thought to legislate against men with the same kind of abnormal physique, who have, doubtless for very good reasons, believed it possible to find satisfaction with each other, and who have believed that the mingling of the sexes, very useful for the purposes of propagation might very well not be of the same importance for the purposes of pleasure. God forbid that we should take sides in this matter. Wouldn't you agree, my dear girl?' went on the beautiful Augustine de Villeblanche, throwing kisses to her that nevertheless appeared more or less suspect, 'but instead of the stake, instead of contempt, instead of sarcasms, weapons that are all completely blunted in these days of ours, would it not be infinitely simpler in a matter so totally indiffer-

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ent to society, so equal to God, and perhaps more useful than we think to nature, to let everyone act after his own fashion. . . What is there to fear from such depravity? . . . In the eyes of every truly wise being, it would appear that it might prevent greater ones, but no one will ever prove to me that it might give rise to dangerous ones. . . Ah, merciful heaven, are they afraid that the whims of these individuals, of whatever sex will bring the world to an end, that they will make a bid for our precious human species, and that their alleged crime will destroy it for failing to attend to its multiplication? Let anyone consider this carefully and he will see that all these imaginary losses are utterly without consequence to nature, and that not only does she not condemn them but she proves to us by innumerable examples that she wants and desires them. Why, if these losses disturbed her and if progeniture was so essential to her, would a woman be able to spend only one third of her life in its service, and would half the beings that she produces leave her hands with a distaste for this progeniture that is nevertheless demanded by her? It would be better to say that she permits the species to multiply, but she does not demand it, and in the certain knowledge that there will always be more individuals than she has a need for, she is far from thwarting the partialities of those who are not in the habit of procreating, and find conformity with such a custom repugnant to them. Oh! leave the good mother to work her own way, and let us assure ourselves that her resources are immense, that nothing that we do outrages her, and that we shall never have the power to commit the crime that will subvert her laws'.

Mademoiselle Augustine de Villeblanche, a sample of whose logic we have just seen, had remained at the age of twenty mistress of her own actions, and having at her disposal an income of thirty thousand francs she had decided from inclination never to marry. Her family was good, without being illustrious; she was the daughter of a man who had made a fortune in India, had no other child and had died without ever succeeding in getting her to marry. The fact must not be concealed, that the kind of caprice for which Augustine had just

made an apology played an infinite part in the repugnance that she evidenced for matrimony. Whether it was due to advice, or education, or organic disposition, or the hotness of her blood (she was born in Madras), or the inspiration of nature, or whatever you like, in fact, Mademoiselle de Villeblanche detested men. Completely given over to what chaste will understand by the word sapphism, she found pleasure only with her own sex, and only compensated herself with the Graces for the contempt she had for Love.

Augustine was a real loss to men: tall, an artist's dream, the loveliest brown hair, her nose somewhat Roman, superb teeth, and eyes that were expressive, vivacious. . . skin of such delicacy, such pallor, in fact the general effect a sort of voluptuousness so stimulating. . . that it is quite certain that seeing her so perfectly made to express love, and so determined never to accept it, a good many men should let slip an infinite number of sarcasms against a taste that was moreover very simple, but which nevertheless by depriving the altars of Paphos of one of the creatures in the whole universe best made to serve them must inevitably arouse petulance in the disciples of the temples of Venus. Mlle de Villeblanche laughed good-naturedly at all these reproaches and all this unkind gossip and indulged her fancies none the less.

"The greatest folly of all," she said, "is to blush for the tendencies that we have received from nature. And to scorn any individual whatsoever because he has unusual tastes is as absolutely barbarous as it would be to make fun of a man or a woman who had emerged from his mother's womb lame, or with only one eye. But to convince fools with such reasonable principles is an undertaking comparable to halting the stars in their courses. Pride finds a sort of pleasure in mocking faults that it does not possess itself, and such delights are so sweet to men, and particularly to halfwits that it is very rare to see them renounce them. Moreover it gives scope for maliciousness, chilly witticisms and paltry puns, and society, that is to say, a collection of creatures brought together by boredom and qualified by stupidity, finds it so pleasant to talk for two or

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three hours without ever saying anything, so delicious to shine at the expense of others, and when censuring a vice to announce that you are a very long way from having it yourself. . .it is a sort of eulogy tacitly uttered upon yourself; for this reward you even consent to make one with the others, to form a clique to crush any individual whose great sin is not to think the same as the common herd, and you return home quite puffed up with your wit, when fundamentally you have only proved by such behaviour your pedantry and stupidity'.

Such were the thoughts of Mlle de Villeblanche. Having decided most positively never to restrain herself, scornful of tittle-tattle, rich enough to be self-sufficient, unconcerned about her reputation, aiming sybaritically at a life of voluptuous delight, with absolutely no ambitions for the blessings of a Heaven in which she had little belief, still less for an immortality that was too chimerical for her senses, and surrounded by a little circle of women who thought as she did, the charming Augustine abandoned herself innocently to all the pleasures that enchanted her. She had had many suitors, but they had all been so maltreated that all hope of her conquest had almost been renounced when a young man named Franville, of a similar standing to her and at least as rich, fell madly in love with her: not only was he not discouraged by her harshness, but he even determined most emphatically not to leave the field until she had been vanquished. He confided his intention to his friends; they laughed at him. He insisted that he would be successful; they defied him to prove it, and he took up the challenge. Franville was two years younger than Mlle de Villeblanche, and as yet had almost no beard, a very pretty figure, the most delicate features, and the loveliest hair in the world. When dressed as a girl, he so became the costume, that he was always deceiving both sexes, and had often received, both from those who were misled and from those who were quite sure of their facts, a host of declarations so unambiguous that in the same day he could have become the Antinoüs of some Adrian, or the Adonis of some Psyche. It was in this dress that Franville

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fancied he could seduce Mlle de Villeblanche; we shall see how he set about it.

One of Augustine's greatest pleasures at carnival time was to dress as a man, and to haunt all the assemblies in this disguise so analogous to her tastes. Franville, who had her movements watched and had until then taken the precaution of seldom showing himself to her, learned one day that the woman he loved so dearly was to appear that same evening at a ball given by the subscribers to the Opera, to which all masks were to be admitted, and that in accordance with her custom this charming girl would be there as a captain of dragoons. He disguised himself as a woman, had himself adorned and fitted out in the utmost elegance and with every possible care, applied plenty of rouge, took no mask, and accompanied by one of his much less attractive sisters, presented himself thus at the assembly, where our adorable Augustine was only going in order to try her luck.

Before Franville had made three turns of the room he had been singled out at once by the knowing eyes of Augustine.

'Who is that lovely girl?' said Mlle de Villeblanche, to the friend who was with her. . . 'I feel sure that I have not seen her anywhere here before. But how could so delicious a creature have escaped our notice?'

And Augustine had no sooner said these words before she did all that she could to enter into conversation with the false Mlle de Franville who at first retreated, turned away, fought shy, and eluded her, all in order to make herself more ardently desired. At last Augustine accosted her, and the conversation beginning at first with the normal type of remark gradually became more interesting.

'The heat in this ballroom is frightful,' said Mlle de Villeblanche. 'Let us leave our companions together and get a little air in those side-rooms where people gamble and take refreshments'

'Oh, sir!' said Franville to Mlle de Villeblanche, whom he still pretended to take for a man. . . 'Truly, I dare not. I am only with my sister but I know that my mother will be

coming with the husband that is destined for me, and if either of them were to see me with you, there would be trouble. . .'

'Well, well, you ought to be able to rise a little above all these childish fears. . . How old are you, angelic child?'

'Eighteen, sir.'

'Ah! I assure you that by the age of eighteen you should have won the right to do whatever you wish. . . Come, come, follow me, and have no fears. . .' and Franville allowed himself to be led away.

'So, you charming creature,' continued Augustine, leading the person that she still believed to be a girl towards the small rooms adjoining the ball-room, 'so, you are really going to be married. . . how I pity you. . . and what is he like, this individual who is destined for you, a tedious fellow, I'll wager. . . Oh! How lucky he is, and how I wish I were in his place! Take me now, would you be willing to marry me? Be quite frank about it, heavenly girl'.

'Alas, as you know, sir, you cannot follow the promptings of your heart when you are young.'

'Perhaps not, but refuse him, this odious creature, we can come to a more intimate acquaintance with each other, and if we suit one another. . . why should we not arrange something? I have, thank God, no need to ask leave myself. . . Although I am only twenty, I am the master of my own fortune, and if you can dispose your parents in my favour, within a week you and I could perhaps be united in eternal bondage.'

During this conversation they had left the ball, and the clever Augustine who was not leading her prey there in order to begin a lifetime of sentimental devotion, had taken care to conduct her to a very isolated room which thanks to the arrangements she had made with the organisers of the ball had with her usual care been placed solely at her disposal.

'Oh God!' cried Franville, when he saw Augustine close the door of the room and take him in her arms. 'Oh merciful heavens, what are you going to do. . . What, completely alone with you, sir, in such an out of the way place. . . Leave me, leave me, I pray you, or I shall call for help at once.'

'I shall deprive you of the power to do that, my divine angel,' said Augustine, pressing her beautiful mouth onto Franville's lips. 'Call now, if you can, and the pure fragrance of your rose-sweet breath will only caress my heart all the sooner.'

Franville defended himself feebly enough: it is difficult to be very angry when you receive with such tenderness the first kiss from her whom you adore. Augustine, encouraged by this, pressed home the attack more strongly with all the vehemence that only the delightful women who are carried away by this desire really know. Hands soon began to stray, and Franville, playing the yielding woman, allowed his own fingers equally to wander. Clothes were pushed aside, and almost at the same instant their fingers attained the spot where each one hoped to find what was fitting.

Then Franville immediately changed his part and exclaimed 'God in Heaven, what, you are only a woman. . .'

'Horrible creature,' said Augustine, placing her hand upon objects which could not permit any illusions. 'What, have I given myself all this trouble only to find a horrible male. . . I must be a most unlucky woman.'

'Truly, no more so than I,' said Franville, readjusting himself, and exhibiting the utmost contempt. 'I adopt a disguise which may seduce men, men whom I love and search for, and all I find is a whore.'

'No, not a whore,' said Augustine bitterly. . . 'I have never been that all my life. It is not right that someone who abhors men should be treated in this fashion. . .'

'What! You are a woman and you detest men?'

'Yes, and for the same reason that you are a man and abhor women. Our meeting is unique, that is all that can be said.'

'It is extremely sad for me,' said Augustine, showing symptoms of the most marked ill humour.

'In truth, mademoiselle, it is even more irksome for me,' said Franville sourly. 'I am now defiled for the next three weeks. Do you not know that in our order we have vowed never to touch a woman?'

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'I should think that you could touch one such as myself without dishonour.'

'Upon my soul, my lovely,' continued Franville, 'I see no very great reason for the exception, and I cannot understand that a vice should grant you extra merit'.

'A vice. . .but is it for you to reproach me for mine, when that which you indulge is equally infamous?'

'Come,' said Franville, 'let us not quarrel, we are both in the same boat. The easiest thing would be for us to part and never see one another again'. And with these words Franville prepared to open the doors.

'Just a moment, just a moment,' said Augustine, barring him from opening. . . 'You will broadcast our adventure to the whole world, I wager.'

'Perhaps I shall amuse myself with it.'

'After all, what does it matter to me. Thank God I am above tittle tattle. Go, sir, go, and tell as much as you like. . .' and then stopping him once again, she said with a smile, 'you know, this is a very extraordinary story. . .making fools of ourselves, both of us'.

'Ah! The deception is much more cruel for persons of my taste than for persons of yours. . .' said Franville, 'and this vice gives us certain aversions. . .'

'Upon my word, dear man, please believe that what you offer us is to us at least as unpleasant. Come, our disgust is equal, but the adventure is most amusing, you cannot fail to agree about that. . . Will you be returning to the ball?'

'I do not know.'

'Speaking for myself, I shall not go back again,' said Augustine. . . 'You have caused me to experience some. . . some annoyance. . .I shall go to bed.'

'As you will.'

'But perhaps the gentleman will have just sufficient respect to give me his arm as far as my house. I live but a few steps away, and I have not my coach, he may leave me there.'

'No, I will accompany you willingly,' said Franville. 'Our

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tastes do not prevent us from being polite will you accept my arm So'

'I only take advantage of it because I can find no better, at all events'

'You may be quite certain that on my part, I only offer it you out of politeness'

On arrival at the door of Augustine's house, Franville prepared to take his leave

'Truly, you are delightful, said Mlle de Villeblanche 'What, would you leave me in the street!'

'My humblest apologies,' said Franville 'I did not dare

'Oh, what bores these men are who do not like women!'

'Well, you see, said Franville, offering Mlle de Villeblanche, however his arm as far as her room, 'the reason is, mademoiselle, that I would like to return to the ball at once, and try to make up for my stupidity

'Your stupidity Are you very annoyed then at having met me?'

'I do not say that but is it not true, that we could, both of us, have done infinitely better?'

'Yes, you are right, said Augustine entering her room at last 'You are right, sir, I especially for I am afraid that this fateful encounter may cost me my life's happiness'

'How so, are you 'not then quite certain of your sentiments?'

'I was yesterday

'Ah, you are not keeping to your principles'

'I am keeping to nothing You make me impatient'

'Well then, I am going, mademoiselle, I am going God forbid that I should trouble you any further'

'No, stay I command you Can you for once in your life take it upon yourself to obey a woman?'

'If,' said Franville, sitting down out of kindness 'There is nothing that I cannot do As I have told you, I am polite'

'Do you not realise that at your age it is frightful to have such perverse tastes?'

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'Do you believe that at your age it is very decent to have such singular tastes?'

'Oh, that is very different. With us it is prudence, modesty . . . even pride, if you like, it is the fear of abandoning ourselves to a sex that only ever flatter us in order to master us. . . Nevertheless, we are not deaf to the call of our senses, and we find compensation amongst ourselves. If we are successful in concealing this properly the result is a veneer of wisdom, which often inspires respect, and thus nature is content, decency is maintained, and morality is in no way outraged.'

'That is what one might call first class sophistries. By applying them one could justify anything. And what have you said with it, that we cannot in the same way put forward in our own favour?'

'Nothing at all. With very different presumptions you should not have the same fears. Your triumph is in our defeat . . . The more you multiply the number of your conquests, the more you increase your glory, and you can only deny the feelings that we inspire in you from vice or depravity.'

'Truly I believe that you are converting me.'

'I would it were so.'

'What would it profit you, being yourself so deep in error?'

'It is an obligation that my sex imposes on me, and since I like women, I am very content to work on their behalf.'

'If the miracle were effected, its results would not be so general as you appear to believe. I would only be willing to be converted for one particular woman at the very most. . . in order to try.'

'The principle is honourable.'

'It is because quite certainly there is something of prejudice, it seems to me, in taking sides without having tasted everything.'

'What, have you never known a woman?'

'Never, and you. . . would you by any chance possess such virgin blossoms?'

'Oh, virgin blossoms, no. . . The women that we see are so skilful and so jealous that they leave us nothing of that. . .

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but I have never known a man in all my life.'

'And do you swear that?'

'Yes, I never wish to see or to know one unless he is as singular as myself.'

'I regret infinitely that I have never made the same vow.'

'I did not believe that it was possible for anyone to be more impertinent. . .' and with these words Mlle de Villeblanche rose and told Franville that he was free to retire. Our young lover, maintaining his cold manner, bowed very low and prepared to leave.

'Are you returning to the ball?' said Mlle de Villeblanche dryly, regarding him with contempt mingled with the most ardent love.

'But of course, I told you so, I believe.'

'So you are not capable of the sacrifice that I made for you.'

'What, have you made some sacrifice for me?'

'I only came back here in order to see nothing more after having had the misfortune of knowing you.'

'The misfortune?'

'It is you who force me to use that expression, and it is only up to you whether or not I use a very different one.'

'And how would you square that with your tastes?'

'What does one not abandon when one is in love!'

'Yes, of course, but it would be impossible for you to love me.'

'I agree, if you must maintain such frightful habits as those I have discovered in you.'

'And if I renounced them?'

'I would sacrifice mine instantly upon the altars of love. . . Oh, treacherous creature, what has this confession cost to my honour, and what have you just wrung from me,' said Augustine, weeping, and letting herself fall back into her chair.

'I have obtained from the most lovely mouth in all the world the most flattering confession that it was possible for me to hear,' said Franville, throwing himself at Augustine's feet. . . 'Ah! Dear idol of my most tender love, see how I have

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tricked you, and I pray you not to punish me for it. On my knees before you I implore your mercy, and there I shall stay until I receive my pardon. You see beside you, mademoiselle, your most constant and most impassioned lover. I believed that this ruse was necessary to conquer a heart whose resistance I knew all too well. Have I succeeded, my lovely Augustine, will you refuse to give to a love without vice what you have condescended to express to a guilty lover? . . . I, guilty. . . guilty of what you believed. . . oh! could you imagine that an impure passion could exist in the soul of one who has never burnt with love for anyone but you.'

'Traitor, you have deceived me. . . but I pardon you. . . Nevertheless you will have nothing to sacrifice for me, deceiver, and my pride will be the less flattered. Ah well, no matter, for myself I sacrifice everything for you. . . Yes, I renounce gladly, to please you, all the errors into which we are led by vanity as often as by our tastes. I realise now that nature has won. I was stifling her by perversions that I now abhor with all my soul. We must not resist her mastery, she has only created us for you, she has only formed you for us. Let us follow her laws, it is by the organ of love itself that today she inspires me with them, and they will become my most sacred laws. Here is my hand, sir, I believe you to be a man of honour, and worthy to lay claim to me. If I have ever deserved for one moment to lose your esteem, perhaps by means of my attentions and tenderness I may redress my sins, and compel you to admit that those of the imagination do not always degrade a well-born soul.'

Franville, overwhelmed by her avowals, and bathing with tears of joy the lovely hands that he held and embraced, rose to his feet, and flung himself into the arms that opened to receive him.

'Oh happiest day of all my life,' he exclaimed, 'is there anything to compare with my triumph. I have brought back to the bosom of virtue the heart over which I shall reign for ever'.

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Franville embraced the divine object of his love a thousand times over, and then released her. The next day he communicated his happiness to all his friends. Mlle de Villeblanche was too good a prize for his parents to refuse him to her, and he wedded her the same week. Tenderness, trust, the nicest restraint and the most severe modesty crowned his marriage, and in making himself the happiest of men he was clever enough to make the most libertine of girls the most wise and virtuous of women.

RETALIATION

A worthy citizen of Picardy, the descendant perhaps of one of those illustrious troubadours of the banks of the Oise or the Somme whose sluggish existence has only been rescued from the shadows some ten or twelve years ago by a great writer of our time, a brave and honest citizen, I repeat, lived in the town of Saint-Quentin so famous for the great men it has given to literature. He lived there in honourable estate, himself, his wife and a cousin thrice removed, a nun of a convent in the town. The cousin thrice removed was a little brunette, bright-eyed, a mischievous little face, with a turned-up nose and a slender figure; she suffered under the weight of twenty-two years, and had been a nun for four of them. Sister Petronilla, for such was her name, had in addition a pretty voice and a much greater disposition for love than for religion. As for M. d'Esclaponville, as our citizen was called, he was a fine jovial fellow of about twenty-eight, who loved his cousin supremely and Mme d'Esclaponville not at all as much, since he had been sleeping with her for ten years already, and a habit of ten years is quite fatal to the fires of hymen. Mme d'Esclaponville—for it is necessary to depict her, what would one be taken for if one did not portray people in an age where only pictures are required, and where even a tragedy would not be received unless the canvas-mongers found at least half a dozen subjects in it—Mme d'Esclaponville, I was saying was a somewhat insipid blonde, slightly washed out, but very white-skinned, with pretty eyes, well fleshed, and with those great chubby cheeks that are commonly described by the world as 'a good squeeze'.

Until now Mme d'Esclaponville had not known that there was any way of revenging herself upon an unfaithful husband. Wise like her mother who had lived for eighty-three years with the same man without once being unfaithful to him, she was still naïve enough and straightforward enough not even to suspect this frightful crime that the casuists have named

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adultery, and the pleasant folk who tone down everything have called quite simply gallantry. But a deceived wife soon acquires designs of revenge from her resentment, and as no one likes to be left behind, there is nothing that she will not do whenever possible so that no one will have anything with which to reproach her. Mme d'Esclaponville perceived at last that her dear lord and master visited the cousin thrice removed a little too often. The demon of jealousy fastened 'upon her soul, she lay in wait, she had enquiries made, and she finished up by discovering that there was very 'little that was so certain in Saint-Quentin as the intrigue of her husband and Sister Petronilla. Certain of her facts, Mme d'Esclaponville finally declared to her husband that the conduct he was observing pierced her very soul, that a person like herself did not merit such treatment, and that she prayed him abandon such irregularities.

'Irregularities?' replied the husband, phlegmatically. 'Do you not know then, my dear friend, that by sleeping with my cousin the nun, I am saving myself? The soul is cleansed in so holy an intrigue, it is self-identification with the Supreme Being, it is the incorporation of the Holy Spirit in oneself: it's no sin at all, my dear, with persons consecrated to God, they purify all that touches them, and to frequent them is, in fact, to open up the gate that leads to celestial beatitude.'

Mme d'Esclaponville, by no means contented with the success of her reproaches, said nothing, but swore deep inside herself that she would find a means more eloquent, more persuasive. . . The devil with that is that women always have one right to hand: however plain they may be, they have only to say the word, and revengers rain down from every side.

There was in the town a certain parish priest known as M. l'Abbé du Bosquet, a fine lusty fellow in his thirties, who ran after all the women and made a forest of all the foreheads of the Saint-Quentin husbands. Mme d'Esclaponville made acquaintance with the priest; imperceptibly the priest also made acquaintance with Mme d'Esclaponville, and finally their mutual acquaintancé was so perfect that they could have

painted one another from top to bottom without any possibility of a mistake. At the end of a month, everyone came to congratulate the unlucky d'Esclaponville who used to boast that he alone had escaped the redoubtable gallantries of the abbé, and that in all Saint-Quentin his was the only head that this gallows-bird had not yet despoiled.

'That cannot be,' said d'Esclaponville to those who brought him the news. 'My wife is as wise as a Lucrece. You can tell me a hundred times over, and I won't believe it.'

'Come with me, then,' said one of his friends, 'come and let me convince you with your own eyes, and we will see afterwards if you have any doubts'.

D'Esclaponville let himself be led away, and his friend took him half a league out of the town to a solitary place where the Somme, enclosed between two fresh, flower-decked hedges, formed a delightful bathing place for the inhabitants of the town. But as the rendezvous was given for an hour when normally no one was yet bathing, our poor husband was chagrined to see arrive, one after the other, his worthy spouse and his rival, without the possibility of interruption from anyone.

'Well, now,' said the friend to d'Esclaponville, 'hasn't your forehead begun to itch?'

'Not yet,' said the citizen, nevertheless rubbing it involuntarily. 'Perhaps she's come here for confession.'

'Let us stay then until the climax,' said the friend. It was not long. Hardly had M. l'Abbé du Bosquet arrived in the delicious shade of the fragrant hedge before he removed from his person anything which might harm the voluptuous contacts that he was meditating, and set himself dutifully to his devout labours of placing, perhaps for the thirtieth time, honest, worthy d'Esclaponville in the same class as the other husbands in the town.

'Well, now do you believe me?' said the friend.

'Let us return,' said d'Esclaponville sourly. 'For by dint of believing I could well kill this damned priest, and that would cost me more than he is worth. Let's go back, my friend,

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and keep my secret, I beg you.'

D'Esclaponville returned home quite confused, and shortly afterwards his gentle spouse arrived and presented herself for supper by his chaste flanks.

'Just a moment, my sweetheart,' said the furious gentleman. 'When I was a child I swore to my father never to sup with harlots.'

'With harlots?' replied Mme d'Esclaponville, benignly. 'Such a suggestion shocks me, my friend, what have you got to reproach me with, then?'

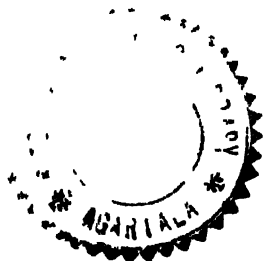
'What! you mass of corruption, what I've got to reproach you with, is what you have been doing this afternoon at the baths with our priest.'

'Oh good heavens,' replied the wife, softly, 'if it's only that, if that's all you have to tell me'.

'Goodness! what do you mean, if it's only that. . .'

'But my friend, I've followed your advice. Didn't you tell me that you risked nothing by sleeping with members of the church, that the soul is cleansed in so holy an intrigue, that it was a self-identification with the Supreme Being, that it made the sacred Spirit enter into you, and in fact it opened up for you the gate that leads to celestial beatitude. . . Well then, my dear, I have only done what you have told me, and therefore I am a saint and not a harlot! Ah! I can assure you, that if any of these blessed souls of God have the means of opening the gate that leads to celestial beatitude, it is certainly M. l'Abbé, for I have never seen such an enormous key.'

ALINE ET VALÇOUR ou LE ROMAN
PHILOSOPHIQUE



ALINE ET VALCOUR OU LE ROMAN PHILOSOPHIQUE

Aline et Valcour ou le Roman Philosophique was published in 1792, a few years after it was written. It is told in letter form and is at the same time a *roman à tiroirs*, since it contains three subsidiary stories, dealing with journeys to two countries, one depraved and unhappy, one righteous and paradisaical, are infinitely more interesting than the main story. The narrator of these journeys, Sainville, seems to be making amends for the rest of de Sade's work and all the ideas he expressed.

* * * * *

IN BUTUA

The prince asked who I was, and when he was told, he pointed out to me a tall white man, dried up and with a sallow skin, of about 66, who, at the command of the monarch came up to me and immediately spoke to me in a European tongue. I told this interpreter, in Italian, that I did not understand the language he was using at all; he immediately replied in good Tuscan, and we made contact with each other. This man was a Portuguese; he was called Sarmiento, captured, as I had been, about twenty years ago. He had become attached to the court and since this time had thought no more of Europe. Through him I told my story to Ben Maacoro—this was the prince's name. He had apparently wanted to know all the circumstances; I kept none from him. He laughed loudly when he was told that I braved so many perils for a woman.

'There are 2000 of them in this palace', he said, 'who wouldn't make me budge one inch. You Europeans are mad', he went on, 'to worship this sex: a woman is there to be enjoyed, and not to be adored; it is an offense against the gods of your country to give to these simple creatures the worship that is meant for them. It is absurd to grant authority to

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women, very dangerous to submit oneself to them; it lowers your sex, and degrades nature, when you become slaves to beings who were created to bow to our superiority'.

Without concerning myself with refuting this argument, I asked the Portuguese where the Prince had acquired this knowledge about our countries.

'He judges them from what I have told him', replied Sarmiento, 'he has never seen any Europeans except you and me'.

I asked for my liberty. The prince made me come close to him. I was naked. He examined my body. He touched it everywhere, rather in the same way as a butcher examines a cow, and said to Sarmiento that he found me too thin to be eaten and too old for his pleasures.

'For his pleasures!' I cried. . . 'Good heavens, are there not enough women?' . . .

'It's precisely because there are too many that he is satiated with them', the interpreter replied. . .

'O Frenchman, do you not know then the effects of satiety? it depraves and corrupts tastes, bringing them closer to nature, while appearing to separate them. When the seed grows in the earth, when it becomes fertile and reproduces, is it by any other means than corruption, and is not corruption the first of the generating laws? When you will have spent some time here, when you will have known the customs of this nation, perhaps you will become more philosophical'.

'Friend', I said to the Portuguese, 'everything that I see, and everything that you tell me, does not give me a great desire to live here. I prefer to return to Europe where they do not eat men, sacrifice girls or use boys'.

'I will request it for you', replied the Portuguese, 'but I doubt very much whether you will obtain it'.

'But at least', I said to the Portuguese, 'I flatter myself that these toothsome morsels which apparently give so much pleasure to the king will not be submitted to my inspection. I renounce the work if I have to deal with boys'.

'Have no fear', said Sarmiento, 'he trusts only his eyes for the choice of such game. Tributes less numerous only arrive

in his palace and the choice is never made by anyone except himself.

As we talked, Sarmiento led me from room to room, and in this way I saw the whole of the palace, except the secret harems, composed of all that was most beautiful of both sexes, but where no mortal ever penetrated.

'All the prince's wives', went on Sarmiento, '12,000 in number, are divided into four classes. He forms these classes himself as he receives the women from the hands of the man who chooses them for him. The tallest, plumpest and best constituted are placed in the detachment which guards the palace. The class known as the 500 slaves is formed of the inferior species of which I have just spoken. These women are normally from 20-30 years old. To them belongs the care of the interior of the palace, the work of the gardens, and generally speaking all the menial tasks. The third class he forms are from 16 to 20 years old. They assist at the sacrifices. It is among them that the victims sacrificed to the god are chosen. The fourth class, finally, includes all that is most delicate and charming from childhood to 16. It is this class which serves principally his pleasures. It is here that the white women would be, if there were any. . .'

'Have there been any?' I interrupted hastily.

'Not yet', replied the Portuguese. 'But he ardently desires some and he neglects no means which could procure some for him'. . .

And at these words hope seemed to be reborn in my heart.

'In spite of these classifications', went on the Portuguese, 'all these women, whatever class they belong to, do not satisfy none the less the brutality of this despot. When he wants one of them he sends one of his officers to administer a hundred strokes to the desired woman. This favour corresponds to the handkerchief of the sultan of Byzantium, and informs the favourite of the honour which is reserved for her. She then goes where the prince awaits her, and as he often uses a great number in one day, a great number receive each morning the admonition that I have just told you about'.

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'Friend', I replied at once, filled with the terrible idea that the Portuguese had just put into my head, 'the execution of this refinement of horror which you have just described will not, I hope, concern me'. . .

'No, no', said Sarmiento, bursting into laughter, 'all that concerns the head of the seraglio. Your functions have nothing in common with his. You find him by your choice out of the 5000 women who arrive every year the 2000 out of which he chooses. When that is done you have nothing more to do with each other'.

'Good', I replied, 'for if I had to make any one of these unfortunate women shed a single tear. . . I warn you. . . I would desert the same day. I will do my duty with care', I went on. 'But, entirely occupied with the woman whom I adore, these creatures will receive from me neither punishment nor favours. Thus, the privations that his jealousy imposes on me touch me very little, as you can see'.

'Friend', the Portuguese replied, 'you seem to me to be a gallant man, you still love in the style of the tenth century. I think that I see in you one of these knights of ancient chivalry, and this virtue delights me, although I am far from adopting it. . . We shall not see this prince again today. It is late. You must be hungry. Come and take refreshment with me. I shall finish your instruction tomorrow'.

I followed my guide. He brought me into a cottage built more or less in the taste of the prince, but infinitely less spacious. Two young negroes served supper on reed mats, and we sat in the African style. For our Portuguese, entirely, denaturalised, had adopted the customs and all the ways of life in the country where he was.

They brought in a piece of roast meat, and my holy man having said his 'Benedicite' (for superstition never abandons a Portuguese), he offered me a slice from the joint which had just been placed on the table.

An involuntary movement seized me in spite of myself.

'Brother', I said, with a distress that I could not hide, 'on the word of a European, could the dish that you serve me here

not be by any chance a portion of the hips or buttocks of one of those maidens whose blood streamed earlier over the altars of your god?’

‘What!’ the Portuguese replied phlegmatically, ‘would such details hold you back? Do you imagine you can live here without submitting to this régime?’

‘Wretched man!’ I cried, getting up from the table, my gorge rising, ‘your feast makes me shudder. . . I would die rather than touch it. . . Is it then over this horrible dish that you dared to demand the blessing of heaven? Terrible man! with this mixture of superstition and crime, you did not even try to conceal your own country. . . Go, I would have recognised you even if you had not named yourself’.

And I was about to leave his house in terror. . . But Sarmiento held me back.

‘Stop’, he said, ‘I forgive this shock to your habits and your national prejudices. But you abandon yourself to them too far. Stop being difficult as far as this country is concerned, and learn how to adapt yourself to situations; repugnances are only weaknesses, my friend, they are minor illnesses of organisation, whose cure you did not study when you were young, and which take possession of us when we have given in to them. It is exactly the same in this as it is in many other things: the imagination, led astray by prejudices, suggests to us first of all that we should refuse. . . you make the experiment. . . you find all is well and taste is sometimes adopted with just as much violence as distaste had been strong in us. I arrived here like you, full of stupid national prejudices: I found fault with everything. . . I found everything absurd; the practices of these people frightened me as much as their morals, and now I do everything like them. We still belong more to habit than to nature, my friend; the latter did no more than create us, the former shapes us. It is madness to think that a moral goodness exists: every type of behaviour, absolutely different in itself, becomes good or bad depending on the country that judges it; but if he wants to live happily, the wise man should adopt that of the region where fate casts

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him. . . In Lisbon I would probably have done like you. . . In Butua I do as the negroes do. . . Well, what on earth do you want me to give you for supper if you don't want to eat what everybody eats? . . . I've got an old monkey there, but he'll be tough; I'll order him to be grilled for you'.

'Very well, I will certainly eat the hind quarters of your monkey with less disgust than the fleshy bits of your king's sultanas'.

'It isn't that, good heavens! We don't eat the flesh of women; it is stringy and tasteless, and you will never find it served anywhere'.*

'This succulent dish which you despise is the leg of a Jagas killed in battle yesterday, young, fresh and whose marrow should be delicious. I had it cooked in the oven, in its own juice, look. . . But nevertheless, allow me only, while you eat my monkey, to swallow some morsels like this'.

'Leave your monkey alone', I said to my host as I noticed a dish of cakes and fruit which was no doubt being prepared for our dessert. 'Take your revolting supper on your own, and in a corner on the other side, as far away from you as possible, let me eat this, and I shall have much more than enough'.

'My dear compatriot', said the cannibalised European to me, as he devoured his Jagas, 'you will recover from these fancies. I have already seen you criticise many things here which you will finish by enjoying immensely. There is nothing to which custom cannot adapt us. There is no taste which cannot come to us through habit'.

'To judge from what you say, brother, the depraved pleasures of your master have already become yours?'

* The most delicate, they say, is that of young boys - a German shepherd having been forced by need to eat this horrible food, continued through taste, and certified that small boy meat was better. An old woman in Brazil declared to Pinto, the Portuguese governor, exactly the same thing. Saint Jerome says the same thing and says that in his journey to Ireland he found this habit of eating male children established among the shepherds; they chose, he said, the fleshy parts. For these two facts stated above see the *Second Voyage of Cook*, vol. II, page 221 and following.

'In many things, my friend; cast your eyes on these young negroes; there are those who, as at home, teach me to do without women, and I assure you that with them I shall not be afraid of losing my pleasure. . . If you were not so scrupulous, I would offer you some. . . Like this', he said, pointing to the disgusting flesh which he was eating. . . 'But you would refuse all the same'.

'You may be sure of it, old sinner, convince yourself that I would rather desert your infamous country, at the risk of being eaten by those who inhabit it, rather than remain there one moment at the cost of corrupting my morals'.

'Do not include in moral corruption the habit of eating human flesh. It is just as simple to eat a man as a cow. Say if you wish that war, the cause of the destruction of the species, is a scourge, but when this destruction is achieved, it is absolutely the same whether it is the entrails of the earth or of man which serve as a sepulchre for these disorganised elements'.

(Next day Sarmiento explains the position of women in Butua)

'It is impossible to depict to you, my friend', the Portuguese went on, 'in what a vile state are the women in this country. It is a luxury to have a great number of them—and the custom to make very little use of them. Both poor and rich think the same way about this question. Thus this sex fulfils in this country the same duties as our beasts of burden in Europe. It is the women who sow, plough and reap. When they come back home it is they who clean and serve, and to complete their sufferings it is always they who are sacrificed to the gods. Perpetually liable to the ferocity of this barbarous race, they are in turn victims of their bad temper, their intemperance and their tyranny. Cast your eyes over that field of maze, see these wretched naked women bent over the furrow which they are ploughing, and trembling under the whip of their husbands who lead them there. Back at the house of this cruel husband they prepare the dinner for him, serve it to him and receive without mercy a hundred strokes of the whip for the slightest negligence'.

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'The population must suffer cruelly from these hateful practices?'

'For that reason it has been practically extinguished; two strange practices add to it more than anything else. The first is the opinion of these people that a woman is impure one week before and one week after the time of the month when nature purges her. Which only leaves one week in the month when he believes her fit to serve him. The second custom, equally destructive of the population, is the rigorous abstinence to which a woman is condemned after she has had a child. Her husband sees her no more for three years. One can add to these motives for depopulation the ignominy that these people cast on the same woman once she is pregnant. From that moment she no more dares to appear, people laugh at her, they point at her and even the churches are closed to her'.

IN TAMOE

'Let us have dinner', said Zamé, 'I will make you enjoy this evening one of their talents which you still do not know'.

When this moment arrived Zamé led me to the public square and I admired its proportions.

'You do not praise its greatest merit', he said to me. 'It has never seen bloodshed, and it will never be sullied by it'.

We went on. I did not yet know the regular building, parallel to Zamé's house, both of which adorned the square.

'The two upper stories', said the philosopher, 'are public granaries. It is the only tribute I impose on them and I contribute to it in the same way as they do. Each one is obliged to bring annually to this store a small portion of the products of his land, from amongst those which can be preserved. The people can have it again at times of scarcity. I always have enough there to feed the capital for two years. The other towns do the same thing. By this means we never fear bad years, and as we have no monopolists it is possible that we shall never die of hunger. The lower part of the building is a theatre.'

'I have regarded this amusement, when well conducted, as necessary to a country. The wise Chinese thought the same; they have cultivated it for more than three thousand years. The Greeks only knew it after them. What surprises me is that Rome only allowed it after four centuries, and that the Persians and Indians never knew it at all.'

'The play is given this evening in order to celebrate your presence. Let us go in, you will see the fruit I gain from this honest and instructive relaxation'.

The place was vast, artistically arranged, and it could be seen that Zamé, who had constructed it, had brought the customs of these people into touch with ours. For he had found a taste for theatrical displays in this nation, although it was still in a state of barbarism. All he had done was to improve this taste and give to it, as far as he was able, the type of usefulness of which he thought it capable. In this building every-

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thing was simple; one saw only elegance without luxury, cleanliness without splendour. The theatre contained almost two thousand people. It was completely full. The stage, which was not very high, was occupied only by the actors. The beautiful Zilia, her husband, Zamé's daughters and some young people from the town represented the different personages whom we were to see in action.

The play was in the language of the natives, and written by Zamé himself, who was good enough to explain the scenes to me as they were played. It concerned a young wife guilty of infidelity towards her husband, and punished for this misconduct by all the misfortunes which could overwhelm an adulteress.

Near to us was a pretty woman whose features I observed to change as the intrigue developed. She turned alternately red and pale, her bosom heaved. . . her breathing became rapid. In the end her tears began to flow and gradually her sorrow increased to such a degree, the efforts she made to contain herself affected her so strongly that, unable to resist any longer. . . she got up, displayed obvious signs of despair, tore her hair and disappeared.

'Well', said Zamé, who had missed nothing of this scene, 'well, do you believe that the lesson works? These are the only punishments necessary to a sensitive race. In France a woman equally guilty would have faced the public; she would hardly have suspected what was being addressed to her. In Siam she would have been delivered over to an elephant. Is not the tolerance of one of these nations, concerning a crime of this nature, equally dangerous as the barbarous severity of the other, and do you not find my lesson better?'

'Oh, sublime man', I cried, 'what blessed use you make both of your power and of your mind'.

We learnt afterwards that the result of this touching incident was a sincere reconciliation between this woman and her husband, the admission and pardon of her misconduct and the voluntary exile of her lover.

'Let the moralists attempt to inveigh against theatrical

spectacles, when such results can be obtained. The moral aim is the same amongst you, said Zame, 'but since your minds are blunted by continued repetitions of the same lessons, they cannot be moved any more. You laugh at them as if they were foreign to you. Your impudence absorbs them, your vanity is opposed to the fact that you could even imagine that they are addressed to you and in this way you repulse, through pride, the darts by which the ingenious censor attempted to correct your morals.'

The next day Zame conducted me to the educational establishments, the two buildings that composed them were immense, higher than the others and divided into a great number of rooms. We began by the men's pavilion. There were more than 2000 pupils there. They came when they were two years old and left at fifteen in order to get married.

These brilliant young people were divided into three classes until they were six they continued to receive the care that this first delicate stage of mankind requires. From six to twelve their dispositions were examined. Then occupations were regulated following their tastes, precedence being given always to the study of agriculture, the most essential of the type of life to which they were destined.

The third class was formed of children from 12 to 15 years of age, only they were then taught the duties of man in society and his relationships with the beings to whom he owes his life, the teachers spoke to them of God and inspired them with love and recognition for this Being who had created them, warned them when they approached the age when they would be entrusted with the fate of a woman, and made them feel what they owed to this precious half of their existence, it was proved to them that they could not hope for happiness in this sweet and charming society except in so far as they tried to shed the same qualities on those who composed it, that in the whole world there was no friend more sincere, no companion more tender, no being in fact more closely linked to us than a wife, that there was none therefore who deserved to be treated with more understanding and more kindness.

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that this sex, timid and fearful by nature, attaches itself to the husband who loves and protects each of them, as much as they hate invincibly him who abuses his authority because it is the stronger. We have this authority that captivates, they have the grace and the charms that please.

'Ah, what would you hope for', they are told, from a heart ulcerated by scorn? . . . What hands would dry your tears when sorrow weighs you down? From whom would you receive help when nature makes you suffer all her evils? Deprived of the sweet consolation that men could have on earth, you would only have in your house a slave terrified by your words, intimidated by your desires, who would perhaps bow to the yoke for a brief moment and who, coming into your arms through constraint, would leave them with hate for you'.

The young men are then made to exercise, on the ground itself, their knowledge of agriculture; that is found besides to be indispensable, since the grounds of this large house are only cultivated and only kept up by their youthful hands.

Afterwards they were occupied by military evolutions, and they were permitted as recreation dancing, wrestling and generally all the games which fortify youth and give grace, preserving both its growth and its health.

When they reach marriageable age the ceremony was as simple as it was natural: the father and mother of the young man conducted him to the educational building for girls and allowed him to make, in front of everyone, the choice he preferred; once this choice was formed, if it pleased the girl, he had permission for a week to talk to his fiancée before the teachers of the girls' school; here they could complete their knowledge of each other and see if they were suited to each other.

If it should happen that one of the two wished to break, the other was obliged to agree to it, because there is no perfect happiness of this kind if it is not natural. Then the choice began again. If the agreement was unanimous, the two young people asked the judges of the nation to unite them; when agreement was given they raised their hands to the sky and

swore before God to be faithful to each other, to help each other mutually in their work and in their illnesses, and never to use the tolerance of divorce unless one or the other were forced to it through indispensable circumstances.

When these formalities were complied with, the young people were placed in possession of a house, as I said before, under the supervision, for two years, either of their parents or of their neighbours; and they are happy.

The directors of the men's college are selected from the number of the unmarried men who, dedicating and attaching themselves to this house, as others among them are attached to that of the legislator, find there in the same way their nourishment and their lodging. Out of this class are chosen those most capable of this august function, bearing in mind that the most extreme regularity of morals must be the first of their qualities.

The women who direct the house of the young girls, where we went shortly afterwards, are chosen from among the wives rejected for the solitary causes of old age or infirmity; these two reasons cannot harm the virtues necessary to the employment to which they are destined.

There were nearly 3000 girls in the house which we visited. They were also divided into three classes by age, in a similar way to the boys. Moral education is the same; the only thing withdrawn is the physical education of the men, which would not suit the delicate sex brought up there; for it is substituted needlework, the preparation of the food they are accustomed to eat and clothing. In Tamoué only women look after this; they make their own clothes and those of their husbands; the clothes for the men's house of education are made in that of the women: the widows or rejected wives make the clothes for the bachelors.

'It is madness to imagine that the bringing up of children needs more than you have seen', Zamé said to me. 'Cultivate their tastes and inclinations, above all teach them only what is necessary, exert over them no other restriction except honour, no other incentive except *faine*, no other punishment

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except a few privations; through these wise methods', he went on, 'you care for these delicate and precious plants while cultivating them. You do not exhaust them, you do not accustom them to be *blasé* about punishment and you do not extinguish their sensibility. 'The most difficult and fiery colts,' said Themistocles, 'become the best horses when a good riding-master trains them. These young seedlings are the hope and pillar of the state. Judge for yourself whether our care is directed towards them'.

**LE COMTE OXTIERN OU LES EFFETS
DU LIBERTINAGE**

LE COMTE OXTIERN OU LES EFFETS DU LIBERTINAGE

On the 22nd October, 1791, '*Le Comte Oxtiern ou Les Effets du Libertinage*,' a play in three acts and in prose was successfully performed at the Théâtre Molière in Paris. At the second performance, on the 4th November there was some trouble.

'An incident almost upset the second performance of this play. At the beginning of the second act a discontented or hostile but certainly an indiscreet spectator shouted out "Lower the curtain!" This was a mistake on his part because he was not allowed to demand that the play should be stopped. The stagehand made a mistake by obeying this isolated order and lowering the curtain more than half way down. In the end many spectators, having had the curtain raised again, shouted "Out with him!" to the ringleader who had caused the disturbance, and they were mistaken in their turn, for they had not the right to expel a man from a play merely for having said what he felt. The result of this was a sort of split in the audience. A very small minority whistled feebly but the author was well compensated by the loud applause of the majority. They asked for the author at the end of the play it was Monsieur de Sade.'

This note appeared in *Le Monteur*, which, after summarising the plot, remarked that 'there is interest and energy in this play, but the part of Oxtiern is revolting in its atrociousness.'

Eight years later, with a new title, *Oxtiern ou Les Malheurs du Libertinage*, the play was acted at the theatre in Versailles, and de Sade played the part of Fabrice for forty sols a day.

Oxtiern is the only play by de Sade which has been published. The names of twenty or so others are known, but many more were probably destroyed or lost.

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ACT ONE

For the first two acts, the scene represents the room of an inn, which opens onto several other rooms. On one side is a writing table, with an armchair beside it.

Scene I.

FABRICE, CASIMIR.

FABRICE: Monsieur Casimir, do you think this room will suit the young lady whom your master is bringing here today?

CASIMIR: I think so, Monsieur Fabrice. Is there a room at hand for Amélie, her maid, and another where Mademoiselle Ernestine can sleep?

FAB: Yes, here are two apartments opening off this one. One key locks all of them. They'll be all right here, I assure you. It's a quiet spot, looking over the garden, with not the slightest sound from the travellers.

CAS: Wonderful. (*taking Fabrice to one side, mysteriously*) Monsieur Fabrice!

FAB: Well?

CAS: He's a very extraordinary man, my master, don't you agree? You who have known him since his youth. . .

FAB: I've known Count Oxtiern for a long time, and that's why I'm willing to bet that you cannot find a more dangerous creature in any province of Sweden.

CAS: Yes, but he pays well.

FAB: And that's what makes him all the more to be feared. There's nothing so pernicious as gold in the hands of the wicked. Who can resist the man who owns the surest way to all corruption? I wish there were no rich people, my friend, except honest folk. But tell me, please, what is this new adventure?

CAS: A charming girl. . . Oh Monsieur Fabrice! What a pity! Good God! you have allowed it! Why should such a creature become the victim of treachery and debauchery?

FAB: (*much surprised*) What, has the crime been committed?

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CAS: It has, Monsieur Fabrice, it has. But the girl he has abducted—ravished—is the daughter of Colonel Falkenheim, the great nephew of Charles XII's favourite. I tell you, Monsieur Fabrice, she is ruined.

FAB: (*as before*) He has not married her! A virtuous girl, deceived, seduced, dishonoured, and he's bringing her here. . . Casimir, run to your master, tell him my house is full, say I cannot receive him I have only too much cause to complain of the liberties he thinks he has the right to allow himself in my house, just because he does me the honour of regarding me as his protégé. I don't want the protection of a great nobleman when the only result, as always happens, is that I am the accomplice of his misdeeds. (*He goes out*)

CAS: (*running to stop him*) Just a moment, just a moment. You'll lose everything and put nothing right Carry on serving him instead, and if you get a chance, try to do something secretly for this young woman (*emphasising what follows*) From here to Stockholm is only a league—it's not too late—they will be resting you have friends in the capital—you understand me, Monsieur Fabrice

FAB (*after a little thought*) Friends. . . yes, I have. But there are other ways, more certain, which I hope will succeed. Now, explain. . . (*The Count's carriage is heard*)

CAS: We must be silent, a carriage is coming. We'll go to your room shortly, and then I will instruct you more fully. . . What a noise! There's no doubt about it, it's the Count. Why should vice travel in such splendour!

FAB: I wish your Count were lodging in Hell! It's a terrible job to be the landlord of an inn, having to keep open house for any and everybody That will always be the one thing that makes me disgusted with my profession

(Ernestine and her maid Amélie arrive alone, for Count Oxtiern and his friend and accomplice, Derbac, have stopped on the way for some unexplained business. When the servants have left the two women alone, Ernestine enlarges on her cruel treatment at the hands of the Count)

Scene V.

ERNESTINE, AMELIE.

ERNESTINE; . . . with what infamous deceit this man snatched me from my family, from my lover, from all that is dearest to me in the world. And the worthy Herman whom I adore with all my heart, do you know that he has left him languishing in chains? With baseless accusations, lies, informers, traitors, he has ruined this unfortunate young man. The gold and the crimes of Oxtiern have achieved everything. Herman is a prisoner. . . perhaps he is condemned and it was over the chains that bind the idol of my heart that the cowardly Oxtiern made me his unhappy victim.

AMELIE: Oh! you make me shudder!

ERN: (*in despair*) What can I hope for, what can I look for! God above, what succour is left to me now?

AME: But your father. . . ?

ERN: You know that he had been absent for some time from Stockholm when Oxtiern cruelly and deceitfully lured me to his house, persuading me that by this means I could gain my lover's freedom and perhaps his hand, through the influence of his brother the Senator, who would be there, he said. This step was doubtless as guilty as it was courageous. How could I have thought of an engagement without my father's consent? Heaven has punished me well for it. Do you know whom I saw in place of the protector I looked for? Oxtiern, the brutal Oxtiern, a dagger in his hand, demanding either my dishonour or my death, and not even allowing me to be mistress of the choice. Had I been so, Amélie, I would not have hesitated, the most terrible tortures would have been more bearable than the degradations that this perverted man prepared for me. Horrible bonds prevented me from defending myself. . . the blackguard. . . and as a final misery, God lets me live, the heavens still shine upon me, and I, I am ruined! (*she falls onto the chair near the table*)

AME: (*in tears, taking her mistress's hands*) Oh! most unfortunate of women, do not despair, I beg you. Your father has

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been informed of your departure. You must believe that he will not lose a moment in flying to your defence.

ERN: It is not from him that I expect punishment for my torturer.

AMÉ: Suppose the Count keeps his promise. He was speaking, I thought, of cherished ties, eternal bonds. . .

ERN: Even if Oxtiern desired them, could I consent to pass my life in the arms of a man I loathe, a man who has done me the most painful of injuries? Can you make a husband of the man that degrades you, can you ever love what you despise? Oh Amélie! I am lost, ruined. Sorrow and tears are all that remain to me, death is my only hope. When honour has been lost, life is impossible. There is consolation for everything else, but never for this!

AMÉ: (*looking round everywhere*) We are alone, madam, what is there to prevent us from escaping, going to the Court, and begging for the protection you so well deserve, and to which you have so much right?

ERN: (*proudly*) If Oxtiern were a thousand leagues away I would go to him, rather than escape. The traitor has dishonoured me, I must have my revenge. I will not seek from a corrupt court protection which would be refused to me. You do not know the extent to which influence and wealth degraded the souls of the men that live in that haunt of horror. Monsters! I would perhaps become another morsel for their vile desires!

(Ernestine and Amélie retire to their rooms to plan revenge. Oxtiern arrives with Fabrice, who asks him what he means to do with the young girl)

Scene VIII.

FABRICE, COUNT OXTIERN.

OXTIERN: My intentions are legitimate, Fabrice. Ernestine is honest, and I am not forcing her at all. An excess of love has perhaps hastened rather too much those steps which will unite her to me for ever, but she must be my wife, she shall

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be, my friend. Would I dare to regard her as anything else, and would I bring her here otherwise?

FAB: That is not what I have heard, sir, but I must believe you all the same. If you were deceiving me I could not have you here.

OXT: I forgive your suspicions, Fabrice, for the virtuous motive which fathers them. But calm yourself, my friend, I repeat, my plans are as pure as she who is their inspiration.

FAB: Count Oxtiern, you are a great lord, I know, but be very sure of this, I beg you, that the moment when your behaviour disgraces you in my eyes, I would regard you only as all the more despicable because you were born to be honest. Having more claims than anyone else to esteem and general consideration you would be all the more guilty for not profiting by them.

OXT: But why all this anxiety, Fabricc; what have I done to warrant these suspicions?

FAB: Nothing yet, I would like to believe. . . But where are you taking this girl?

OXT: To my estate near Nordkoping, and I shall marry her as soon as she is there.

FAB: Why is her father not with her?

OXT: He was not at Stockholm when she left, and the intensity of my love did not permit formalities I considered myself able to do without; you are very strict, my friend. Never before have I seen you so severe.

FAB: It's not a question of severity, but of justice, sir. If you were a father would you like your daughter taken from you?

OXT: I would not like her to be dishonoured. Is Ernestine so, since I am marrying her?

(Amélie enters and Oxtiern asks her to let him know when Ernestine would like to see him. He exits, and Fabrice decides to hurry at once to Stockholm to see what can be done for Ernestine)

ACT TWO

Scene I.

OXTIERN, DERBAC.

OXT: She is such a sensitive creature. . .

DERBAC: Very stimulating, isn't it? Women are really delicious when their tears heighten their charms with all the disorder of grief. You are, my poor Count, what might be called a very corrupt person.

OXT: What do you expect, my friend? It was from the teachings of women that I learnt all the vices I now afflict on them.

DER: You'll marry her, at least?

OXT: Can you for one moment imagine me capable of such stupidity?

DER: But once you have her in your castle, what excuse will you give her to justify your conduct? She will never let you live with her like a lover with his mistress.

OXI: Oh! Her intentions, her desires, her wishes are the last things in the world that worry me. My happiness, my satisfaction, these are my aims, Derbac, and I have achieved them. And in any adventure of this sort, once I am content, everyone else should be.

DER: Ah! my friend—dear Count! Please allow me to oppose such dangerous principles for one moment.

OXT: No, you will only displease me without convincing me. Never forget that your fortune depends on mine. What I look for in you, is not a censor, but an agent for my plans.

DER: I flattered myself you only saw me as a friend, and would be grateful for my advice. . . This present plot is horrible.

OXT: I can well imagine that in your eyes it is, because you are a subordinate creature, full of gothic prejudice, which the torch of philosophy has not yet been able to illuminate. A few years at my school, Derbac, and you'll no longer pity a woman for so small a misfortune.

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DER: This delicate and gentle person, even more for our good than for her own, had tenderly pinned all her happiness and fortune on her virtue. When she is outraged by scoundrels, she has very definite rights to our love and protection.

OXT: Ah! Derbac, you're moralising.

DER: As you will. Well then, let us consider only the dangers to you. Do you see none for you in all this? The colonel, his son, young Herman, whom this charming girl loves so dearly—are you afraid of none of them?

OXT: The colonel is an old man, he will fight badly. . . he won't fight at all. His son will never reach me, I have set traps for him. (*softly*) He is a dead man, my friend, if he once sets foot on my land. (*loudly*) As for Herman, the chains in which I make him languish are of a kind which cannot break. I managed to involve him in a money matter from which he cannot disentangle himself without funds, and he is far from being able to find them. He's costing me a lot—false witnesses, judges to be bought. I defy him to extricate himself.

DER: And the law, my friend, what of that?

OXT: I have never known it proof against the power of gold.

DER: And what of that innermost part of your being whereby virtue can always claim its rights? I mean your conscience?

OXT: Unruffled, completely calm.

DER: But the Court, my dear Count? You are both its ornament and its delight. Suppose the Court learns of your irregular behaviour?

OXT: It is the only thing I have to fear from this female fury. She has threatened me, and therefore I must make quite certain of her. Remember to give orders for everything to be ready by dawn tomorrow. I must get well away from Stockholm as soon as possible. Fabrice has turned righteous, and we are still too near the capital for me not to fear the remorse of such a knave. I know nothing more terrible, more humiliating, than the necessity to manage these rascals when one needs them. It is the duty of crime, but by God, my friend, it is the torment of pride. To win Fabrice, I have

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set my servant on him. Who would credit it? Casimir is not so firm as I would have thought. You have no idea, my friend, of the effect a girl's tears can have upon these feeble cowardly souls.

DER: It is fortunate for humanity there are few as perverted as your own!

OXT: Only because I have worked on mine, my friend. I have seen and experienced much. If you only knew where a surfeit of experience can lead you!

DER: I hear someone in Ernestine's room—it is Amélie. You are wanted, I'll wager. . . Lucky fellow!

OXT: I have told you, the only way to make women love you is to torment them; I know of no surer method.

(Amélie informs Count Oxtiern that Ernestine would like to speak to him. He sends Derbac away. The scene between Ernestine and Oxtiern is very similar to the dialogues between Gramwell and Henriette in 'Miss Henriette Stralson'; dignity, virtue, despair and desire for revenge on one side, deception, guile, threats and brutal moments of frankness on the other. It is interrupted by the news that Ernestine's father, Colonel Falkenheim, has arrived at the inn. Ernestine sees her father who promises not to abandon her and to avenge her, but afterwards she decides to kill Oxtiern herself or die in the attempt. She sends a note to him saying that she has a defender who will challenge him that night in the garden, and who will be dressed in white. Falkenheim, believing that his daughter has prompted her brother to attack Oxtiern, decides that only his own victory over Oxtiern can restore the family honour, and sends another challenge to the Count.)

ACT THREE

The scene represents the garden of the inn. Throughout the scene the light slowly fades, so that by the end the stage is in complete darkness.

(Derbac hands Oxtiern Ernestine's challenge, guessing that the opponent in white will be the girl herself. Oxtiern doubts this but is furious with her for daring to plot against his life, and swears revenge. Casimir arrives with the Colonel's challenge, and reveals that one of the servants of the inn has bought Ernestine some white clothing. He is certain that her brother could not possibly have arrived at the inn.)

Scene II.

DERBAC, OXTIERN, CASIMIR.

DER: *(with emphasis)* All is quite clear, Oxtiern, this is how it is. In order to disguise her plan from the Colonel, Ernestine has told him she will be using her brother to revenge her; the Colonel believes it; he does not want his son to fight, and will appear himself at the rendezvous.

OXI: *(with great interest)* And Ernestine will also come?

DER: Undoubtedly.

OXT: She will come dressed in white?

CAS: That is certain, sir.

OXT: *(with the wildest, most vehement passion)* Congratulate me, friends, we were looking for ways to rid us of this girl, and fate offers one, unparalleled before. *(more coldly)* Go, Casimir, tell the Colonel I await him. It will be dark, say I will be dressed in white, and without hesitation he should attack anyone he sees wandering in the dark dressed this way.

DER: *(with a cry of horror)* Oh! You will have the girl slain by her father's hand!

OXT: Silence. Can't you see, friends, fate has offered me this means of punishing her. Would you have me not profit by it?

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DER: This is an abominable crime, it revolts me!

OXT: It will help to restore my calm.

CAS: (*Trying to calm his master*) Sir, sir.

OXT: Quiet, you rogue. If you are afraid, be off with you.

CAS: I obey. The Colonel shall know that his enemy will appear at the rendezvous dressed in white. (*aside, as he leaves*) Ah! I hope Fabrice will have returned before this horror is committed. (*exit*)

Scene III.

OXTIERN, DERBAC.

OXT: That valet makes me impatient, he is afraid. Such idiots have no principles; anything outside the normal run of vice and villainy shocks them; they are terrified of remorse.

DER: Bad luck to the scoundrels that it does not stop; misfortune on you if you continue. A blacker crime was never conceived, not even in Hell.

OXT: I agree, but it is useful. . . Did not this arrogant creature plot my destruction?

DER: She set herself against you, risking her own life.

OXT: Playing the heroine. . . I do not like such outbursts of vanity in a woman.

DER: Oh! (*with the deepest feeling*) Has she no right to pride, she who in all the world most deserves our respect?

OXT: Good, there you are back again at your moralising. For however short a time I leave you, I have the utmost trouble pulling you together again. . . Now then, Derbac, courage. In case Casimir does not fulfil my commission properly, see to it yourself. The Colonel will come. Tell him to attack his enemy, who will come towards him dressed in white. It will be his daughter. . . Understand, Derbac, and I shall be revenged (*he goes out*)

Scene IV.

DERBAC.

DER: (*alone*) No, I cannot harden myself to have a hand in such devilry. Let Casimir handle it, we must not be involved

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in this horror. I shall leave this man's society, and return to the poverty from which his influence rescued me. It is a pity, undoubtedly, but less of one than being further corrupted by his unworthy teaching. I am less afraid of misfortune than crime. However much an honest man may suffer, he has his heart as consolation. (*he goes out, seeing someone approach*)

Scene V.

THE COLONEL, *groping in the darkness.*

COLONEL: This is the place for the duel. . . I thought he would be here first; he won't be long, without doubt. Unhappy man, what are you about to do? How cruel and unjust are the laws of honour! Why must the injured party risk his life, when the aggressor is so guilty! Oh! let him kill me, cut me to pieces, I cannot go on living after I have lost my honour. (*he shivers*) I think I hear him. .. Why is it that my enemy's approach fills me with emotions that I cannot master! But I have known fear before. I am upset by the desire for revenge which prevents me from distinguishing the true cause of the impressions which trouble me. This night has become so black I shall hardly be able to make out the colour he is supposed to be wearing. (*the rest is said very softly, so that Ernestine cannot hear it*) Here he is, attack him silently, and no noise during the fight. (*he draws his sword and falls on Ernestine, dressed as a man in the appropriate colours. The fight has hardly begun when two shots are heard in the wings, fired by the Count and Herman. Herman, having killed the Count, rushes in, followed a moment later by Fabrice.*

Scene VI.

THE COLONEL, ERNESTINE, HERMAN,
Later FABRICE.

This scene must move with the greatest speed.

HERMAN: (*still in the wings*) Die, traitor. Ernestine is avenged. (*flying to separate the duellers*) Stop, merciful Heavens, whose

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blood are you about to shed! Unhappy father, recognise your daughter!

ERN: (*flinging away her sword*) Oh God! (*she throws herself into her father's arms*)

COL: Dear, unhappy child!

FAB: (*energetically, and only appearing at this point*) Your troubles are over, Colonel. As soon as I heard of the Count's villainies, I flew to Stockholm, and extricated your young friend from the fetters in which Oxtiern held him captive. You can see the first use that he makes of his freedom.

HER: That coward, his defeat has cost me little; it is not difficult to triumph over traitors. I conquered him, and ran to you, sir, to tell you of the ghastly crime of which he was making you the instrument, despite yourself. I come to ask you for the hand of this beloved girl, whom I have saved for you. I flatter myself that now I am worthy of her. (*the Colonel makes a gesture of approval, and of grief*)

ERN: (*to Herman*) Can I still claim such happiness?

HER: (*tenderly to Ernestine*) Could the crimes of a blackguard such as Oxtiern despoil Nature's loveliest masterpiece?

COL: Ah! Fabrice, what gratitude we owe you. How can we repay it?

FAB: With your friendship, my friends, I merit it. I have made the best use of my money—the punishment of crime and the reward of virtue. Can anybody tell me where else I could have got a higher rate of interest! . . .

THE END OF THE THIRD AND LAST ACT.

DISCOURS PRONONCE A LA FETE
DECERNEE PAR LA SECTION DES
PIQUES AUX MANES DE MARAT
ET LE PELLETIER

DISCOURS PRONONCE A LA FETE DECERNEE PAR
LA SECTION DES PIQUES AUX-MANES DE MARAT
ET LE PELETTIER

This funeral oration for the two regicides is interesting as a document of the Revolution, particularly as it had great success and was given a wide distribution immediately after it was delivered.

* * * * *

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE CEREMONY DEDICATED BY THE SECTION DES PIQUES TO THE MEMORY OF MARAT AND LE PELLETIER, BY SADE, CITIZEN OF THIS SECTION, AND MEMBER OF THE SOCIETE POPULAIRE.

Citizens,

The duty dearest to hearts which are truly republican is the recognition due to great men; from the performance of this sacred act are born all the virtues necessary to the maintenance and glory of the state. Men love praise, and every nation that does not refuse to praise merit will always find in its bosom men who are anxious to make themselves worthy of it; too greedy for these noble tributes, the Romans, through a harsh law, demanded that a long interval should pass between the death of a famous man and his panegyric: by no means let us imitate this severity, it would cool our ardour; let us never stifle an enthusiasm of which the inconveniences are mediocre, and of which the fruits are so necessary: Frenchmen, honour and admire always your great men. This valuable upsurge of praise will increase them among you, and if ever posterity should accuse you of some error, would your sensibility not serve as an excuse?

Marat! Le Pelletier! They who celebrate you at this moment are safe from such fears, and the voice of the centuries

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to come will only add to the homage paid to you today by the living generation.

Sublime martyrs of liberty, already placed in the temple of memory, it is from there that, always revered by mortals, you will hover over them, like benevolent stars which light them, and that, equally useful to mankind, if they find in some of them the source of all the treasures of life, they will find in the others the fortunate model of all the virtues.

Astonishing freak of fate, Marat, it was from the depths of this obscure cavern where your ardent patriotism was opposing the tyrants with such great vigour that the spirit of France indicated the place in this temple where we revere you today.

Egoism, they say, is the prime mover of all human actions, and there is none amongst them, we are assured, which does not include personal profit as its basic motive; relying on this harsh belief, these terrible detractors of all fine things reduce merit to nothing. O Marat! How far your sublime deeds except you from this general law! What motive of personal interest was it that took you away from the commerce of men, deprived you of all the comforts of life, and left you to go on living in a kind of tomb? What other motive beyond that of enlightening your fellow-men, and ensuring the happiness of your brothers? What gave you the courage to brave everything. . . down to weapons directed against you, if it was not the most complete disinterestedness, the purest love of the people, the most ardent example of civic virtue that we have ever seen?

Scaevola, Brutus, your only merit was to arm yourselves for a moment in order to cut short the days of two despots, for an hour or more your patriotism shone; but you, Marat, through what more difficult path you followed the career of a free man, how many thorns impeded your road before its end could be reached; it was in the midst of tyrants that you spoke to us of liberty; but, little accustomed as we were still to the sacred name of this Goddess, you adored her before we knew her; the daggers of Machiavelli trembled in every direction over your head without your noble brow appearing to be affected by them; Scaevola and Brutus each threatened their tyrants

Your so much greater soul wished to immolate at one and the same time all those who oppressed the earth, and yet slaves accuse you of favouring bloodshed. Great man, it was their blood that you wished to shed; you only revealed yourself as prodigal with theirs in order to spare the blood of the people; with so many enemies how could you fail to succumb; you showed where the traitors were, treason was bound to strike you.

* Timid and tender sex, how could it be that your delicate hands seized the dagger that sedition had sharpened? . . . Ah, your haste in coming to scatter flowers on the tomb of this true friend of the people makes us forget that crime could find an arm among you. The barbarous assassin of Marat, resembling those beings to whom no sex can be assigned, vomited up by hell for the despair of both of them, does not belong directly to either of them. A funeral veil must envelop her memory for ever; may men cease to present her to us, as they are venturing to do under the enchanting symbol of beauty. Too credulous artists, break up, cast down and disfigure the features of this monster, or offer it to our indignant eyes only in the midst of the furies of Tartarus.

Gentle and sensitive souls! Le Pelletier, may your virtues come for a moment to sweeten the ideas which these pictures have soured; if your timely principles on national education are adopted one day the crimes of which we complain will no longer be the scourge of our history; friend of children and of men, how I love to follow you in the moments where your political life is entirely consecrated to the sublime personage of people's representative; your early opinions aimed at assuring us of this valuable liberty of the press without which there is no more liberty on earth: scorning the false glory of rank where absurd and chimerical prejudices placed you at that time, you believed, and you made your belief public, that if differences could exist between men, it was only for virtues and talents to establish them.

Severe enemy of tyrants, you courageously voted for the death of him who had dared to plot that of a whole nation; a

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fanatic struck you, and his homicidal sword broke all our hearts; his remorse avenged us, he became his own executioner; it was not enough. . . villain! why cannot we destroy your memory? Ah! Your end is in the heart of every Frenchman. Citizens, if there were men among you who were not yet sufficiently imbued with the feelings due from patriotic hearts to such friends of liberty, let them turn their gaze for one moment to the last words of Le Pelletier, and, filled at the same time with love and veneration they will experience more than ever the hate due to the memory of the parricide who was capable of cutting short so fine a life.

Holy and divine *Liberty*, the only goddess of France, allow us to shed at the foot of your altars still more tears over the loss of your two most faithful friends, let us weave cypresses into the garlands of oak with which we surround you. These bitter tears purify your incense and do not extinguish it; they add one more piece of homage to all those that our hearts present to you. . . . Ah, let us cease to shed them, citizens, they breathe, these famous men for whom we weep, our patriotism revives them, I see them in our midst. . . . I see them smile upon the worship our civic pride pays them. I hear them announce to us the dawn of those serene and tranquil days when Paris, prouder than was ever ancient Rome, will become the centre of talent, the terror of despots, the temple of the arts, the homeland of all free men; from one end of the earth to the other all nations will covet the honour of being allied to the French nation; replacing the frivolous merit of offering to foreigners only our costumes and our fashions. it will be laws, examples, virtues and men which we shall give to the astonished earth, and if ever worlds should overturn, yielding to the imperial laws which move them, and then collapse, mingling together, the immortal Goddess whom we honour, eager to show to future races the globe inhabited by the nation which served it best, would indicate only France to the new men that nature would have created again.

SADE, *Editor*

The *Assemblée Générale de la Section des Piques*, applauding the principles and the vigour of this speech, ordered it to be printed and sent to the National Convention, to all the *Départements*, to the Armies, the constituted authorities of Paris, the 47 other Sections and to the peoples' Societies.

Decreed in the *Assemblée Générale*, this 29th September, 1793, year II of the French Republic, one and indivisible.

VINCENT, *President*

Girard

Mangin,

Paris

} *Secretaries*

JULIETTE, OU LES PROSPERITES
DU VICE

JULIETTE

It was in the convent of Panthémont that Justine and I were educated. You know the fame of this abbey and you know that it was from its bosom there came for many years the prettiest and the most libertine women in Paris. Euphrosine, the young person whose steps I wished to follow, who, living near my parents, had escaped from her paternal home to fling herself into a life of debauchery; Euphrosine had been my companion in this convent, and as it was from her and from a nun, one of her friends, that I received the first principles of that morality which people were surprised to see in me at so young an age in the stories which my sister has just told you, I ought, it seems to me, before all else, to describe to you something of both of them. . . .to give you an exact account of those first moments of my life when, seduced and corrupted by these two sirens the seed of all vice was sown in the very depths of my heart.

The nun in question was called Madame Delbène; she had been abbess of the house for five years, and had attained the age of thirty when I became acquainted with her. It was impossible for anyone to be prettier. an artist's ideal, her face sweet and heavenly, fair, with large blue eyes full of the most tender sympathy, and a figure worthy of the Graces; a victim of ambition, the young Delbène had been sent as a young girl of twelve into a cloister in order that an elder brother whom she detested could become richer. Locked up at an age when the passions were beginning to express themselves, although Delbène had not yet made any choice, and loving the world and men in general, it had not been without sacrificing herself, without triumphing over the severest of struggles that she had at last resolved to obey. Very advanced for her age, having read all the philosophers, having meditated prodigiously, Delbène, when she condemned herself to this retreat, had retained two or three of her friends. They came to see her, they comforted her; and since she was extremely rich, they continued to supply

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her with all the books and all the delicacies that she could desire, even those which must further enflame an imagination. . .already most lively, and which her retreat was in no way cooling.

As for Euphrosine, she was fifteen when I linked myself to her, and she had been Mme Delbène's pupil for eighteen months when they both proposed that I should join their company, on the day on which I had just attained my thirteenth year. Euphrosine had brown hair, was tall for her age, very slender, with most pretty eyes, plenty of wit and vivacity, but less pretty, and much less interesting than our Superior.

* * * * *

This passage is typical of the education given to Juliette by Madame Delbène.

'We call conscience, my dear Juliette, that sort of inner voice which is heard in us when we transgress some forbidden thing, whatever its nature might be: a very simple definition which reveals at the first glance that this conscience is the product only of the prejudice acquired by education, so that all which we forbid a child to do causes him remorse when he infringes it, a remorse which he nourishes until the prejudice is overthrown and he sees that there had been no real wrong in the forbidden thing.

'Thus conscience is purely and simply the work either of the prejudices instilled in us or of the principles that we form for ourselves. That is so true that it is more than possible to form for ourselves based on mental impulses a conscience which will torment and harass us every time we do not fulfil, in their entirety, the plans of amusements, even vicious. . . even criminal ones that we had promised ourselves to perform for our satisfaction. From this is born that other sort of conscience which in a man above all prejudices speaks up against

him when through taking false steps, in order to attain happiness, he has followed a path contrary to that which should naturally have led him to it. Thus according to the principles which we have formed for ourselves we can equally repent of having done too much wrong or of not having done enough. But let us take the word in its most simple and most common meaning; then remorse, that is to say the organ of this internal voice which we have just called conscience, is a perfectly useless weakness whose tyranny we should vanquish with all the vigour with which we are capable; for remorse, once again, is only the work of the prejudice produced by fear of what may happen to us after doing something forbidden, of whatever kind it may be, without enquiring whether it is good or bad. Take away the punishment, change public opinion, destroy the law, declimatize the subject, the crime will still remain and yet the individual will have no more remorse. Remorse is therefore no more than a wearisome reminiscence, the result of laws and adopted habits, but in no way dependent upon the type of transgression. Oh! If that were not so, would you ever be able to suppress it? Nevertheless, is it not quite certain that you can succeed in this, even in matters of the greatest consequence, by reason of the advancement of your mind and the way in which you labour to extinguish your prejudices? In such a way that, as these prejudices are gradually effaced by age or as the habit of actions which terrified us succeeds in hardening the conscience, remorse, which was only the effect of this conscience's weakness is soon completely destroyed, and thus we achieve as far as we like, the most terrifying excesses. But it may perhaps be objected that the type of sin may do more or less violence to remorse. No doubt, because the prejudice against a major crime is stronger than that against a minor one. . .the punishment of the law more severe; but learn to destroy all prejudices equally, learn to put all crimes in the same rank, and as you quickly become convinced of their equality, you can model your remorse according to them, and as you will have learnt to brave the remorse of the weakest you will soon learn to overcome the repentance

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of the strongest, and to commit them all with an equal imperturbability. . .with a similar indifference. Which means, my dear Juliette, causes you to experience remorse after a bad deed, because you believe with conviction in the system of free will, and say to yourself: "How unfortunate of me not to have acted differently!" But if you would really persuade yourself that the system of free will is an illusion and that we are impelled to perform all our deeds by a force more powerful than ourselves, if you would be convinced that everything is useful in this world, and that the crime of which you repent is as necessary to nature as the war, pestilence and famine with which she periodically distresses empires, feeling infinitely more tranquil before all the actions of our life, we would not even conceive remorse and my dear Juliette would not tell me that I am wrong to lay to nature's account what should only be laid to that of my depravity.

'All moral effects,' went on Mme Delbène, 'derive from physical causes to which they are irresistibly bound, like the sound which results from the shock of the drumstick upon the skin of the drum: no physical cause, that is to say no shock, and there is necessarily no moral effect, that is no sound. Certain dispositions of our organs, the nervous fluid which is irritated either more or less by the nature of the atoms that we breathe. . . , by the type or quantity of the nitrous particles contained in the foods we eat, by the circulations of the humours and by a thousand other external causes, determine a man towards crime or towards virtue, and often in the same day towards first one then the other: that is the shock of the drumstick, the result of vice or virtue; a hundred louis stolen from my neighbour's pocket or given from mine to an unfortunate, that is the effect of the shock, or the sound. Are we masters of these second effects when the first causes necessitate them? Can the drum be beaten without giving out a sound? And can we oppose this shock when it is itself the result of things so foreign to us, and so dependent on our organic structure? It is therefore madness and extravagance not to do all that seems good to us and to repent of what we have done.

Remorse, then, is, according to that, only a pusillanimous weakness which we must conquer, as much as it can depend on us, by reflection, reasoning and habit. Besides, what change can remorse bring to what has been done? It cannot lessen the wrong since it only ever comes after the action has been committed, it very rarely prevents it being committed again, and is consequently good for nothing. After the wrong has been committed, two things necessarily happen either you are punished, or you are not. In the second hypothesis remorse would undoubtedly be a dreadful stupidity for what use would it serve to repent of an action of whatever kind it may be which afforded you a very complete satisfaction, and which did not have any troublesome consequences? To repent in such a case of the wrong this action could have done your neighbour would be to love him better than yourself. Consequently, in this case, there would be no room for remorse. If the action is discovered and is to be punished, then, if you examine it deeply, you will discover that it is not the wrong occasioned to your neighbour by your action that is repented, but your own clumsiness in committing it in such a way that it could be discovered, it is then undoubtedly necessary to give careful thought to the considerations produced by your regrets at this clumsiness, but only to extract greater prudence from them, if the punishment allows you to live. But these reflections are not remorse, for real remorse is the sorrow produced by what you have done to others, and the reflections of which we are speaking are the effects of the sorrow produced by the wrong that you have done yourself, which reveals the vast difference that exists between these two emotions, and shows at the same time the usefulness of one and the ridiculousness of the other.

.

“True wisdom, my dear Juliette, does not consist in repressing our vices, because since these vices constitute almost the only happiness in our life to wish to repress them would be to become our own executioners. But it consists in abandoning ourselves to them with such secrecy, and such extensive

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precautions that we may never be caught out. Do not be afraid that this may diminish their delight: mystery adds to the pleasure. Moreover, such behaviour ensures impunity, and is not impunity the most delicious nourishment of debauchery?

'Having taught you to master remorse born of the sorrow of doing wrong too openly, it is essential, my dear friend, for me to show you now the way to extinguish completely this confused inner voice which sometimes returns in passion's calm to protest against the irregularities into which we were led by that passion. Now this way is as certain as it is pleasant, since it consists only in repeating what caused us remorse so often that the habit either of committing the action or of anticipating it entirely saps every possibility of evoking regrets for it. This habit, by destroying prejudice and forcing our soul to be frequently stirred by the means, and in the circumstances, which originally disturbed it, ends by rendering the newly adopted conditions easy and even delightful. Pride adds its support. Not only have we done something that no one would dare to do, but we have become so accustomed to it that we can no longer exist without it. That is one pleasure first of all. The action committed produces another. Who can doubt that this multiplication of pleasures will very rapidly accustom a soul to yield to the way of life that it must acquire, however painful it may have found at the beginning the forced situation to which this action compelled it?

'Do we not experience what I am saying in all the so-called crimes governed by voluptuous appetite? Why does one never repent of a crime of debauchery? Because debauchery promptly becomes a habit. It could be the same with all licence. Like lasciviousness, they can all easily turn into a habit, and like lust, they can all arouse in the nerval fluid an excitement which greatly resembles that passion, can become as delicious, and consequently can be transformed, like it, into a necessity'.

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JULIETTE, OU LES PROSPERITES DU VICE

When *La Nouvelle Justine* was published in 1796 Justine had acquired a sister, Juliette, who during the last six of the ten volumes tells the story of her life to Justine, since the two sisters had been separated since children In direct contrast to Justine, Juliette is entirely wicked and her whole delight is in crime She travels through most European countries and Russia, meeting most of the reigning sovereigns and Pope Pius VI

The book begins as follows

* * * * *

After Juliette has stolen money for Dorval, himself a famous thief, he attempts to justify theft as a natural institution The two footnotes added to this passage indicate that *Juliette* was written before the Revolution and had to be brought up to date

'When laws were first promulgated, and the weak consented to the loss of a portion of their freedom in order to preserve the remainder, the maintenance of their possessions was undoubtedly the first thing that they desired to enjoy in peace, and the prime object of the restraints that they demanded The stronger gave their consent to laws which they were sure they could escape the laws were made It was decreed that every man would possess his inheritance in peace and that anyone who interfered in his possession of that inheritance would suffer punishment But there was nothing of nature in this, nothing that she ordained, nothing that she inspired It was all the work of men, who henceforth were divided into two classes the first class gave up a quarter in order to obtain the tranquil enjoyment of the rest, the second, profiting by this quarter, and realising that it could have the other three

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quarters whenever it liked, agreed to prevent, not the weak being ravaged by the strong, but the weak from ravaging one another, in order that it alone could strip them at its own convenience. Thus theft, nature's sole institution, was in no way banished from the face of the earth, but it existed in other forms: it became judicial theft. The magistrates stole by taking payment for justice that they should have given freely. The priest stole by taking payment for serving as a mediator between man and his God. The merchant stole by monopolising, by charging one third more for his merchandise than its real intrinsic value. Monarchs stole by imposing upon their subjects the arbitrary rights of taxes, tolls, etc. All these thefts were permitted, all were authorised in the specious name of rights; no one thought of taking action any longer except against the most natural thefts, that is to say, against the perfectly simple conduct of a man who, pistol in hand, demanded money which he needed from those whom he believed to be richer than himself. All this, moreover, without realising that the first thieves, to whom nothing was ever said, were the sole cause of the crimes of the second, the only one which forced him, weapon in hand, to go back to the properties which the first usurper had so cruelly ravished from him. For, if all these thefts were only usurpations which brought about the poverty of the subordinate persons, the subsequent thefts of these inferior beings, made necessary by those of the others, were no more crimes, they were secondary effects necessitated by major causes; and as soon as you authorise this major cause, it becomes legally impossible for you to punish its effects; you can no longer do it without injustice. If you push a servant against a precious vase, and in his fall he breaks it, you no longer have the right to punish him for his clumsiness; you should only deal with the cause which brought about your punishing him. When some unfortunate peasant, reduced to beggary by the immensity of the taxes you impose upon him*, deserts his

* It is evident that Juliette's speaker is only referring here to the peasants of the *ancien régime*; they were sometimes pressed by poverty, but the peasants of today, inflated by luxury and indolence, can no longer serve as examples. (Note by the publisher of the First Edition.)

plough, seizes a weapon, and goes to waylay you upon the high road, you most certainly commit a gross injustice if you punish him. For it is not he who is at fault, he is the servant pushed against the vase: do not push him, and he will break nothing. If you do push him, do not be surprised if he does break something.

Thus this unfortunate man, in going to rob you, is in no way committing a crime; he is attempting to get back the goods that you have previously usurped from him, you or yours: he is only doing what is natural; he is seeking to re-establish the equilibrium which in morals as well as physics is the first of the laws of nature; he is only doing what is just.

But that is not what I meant to demonstrate: it does not require any proofs or need any argument to show that the weak man is only doing what he must in trying to get back his alienated possessions. Of what I wish to convince you is that the strong man himself is committing no crime or injustice in attempting to despoil the weak, because that is the very situation in which I am placed, the very behaviour that I permit myself every day. Now this proof is not difficult, and the act of theft, in this instance, is certainly much more a thing of nature than the other case. For the reprisals of the weak against the strong do not really come within nature. They do from the moral point of view but not from the physical, since to take these reprisals the weak man must employ forces that he has not received from nature, he must adopt a character that he has not been given, he must in a way constrain nature. But what does really come within the laws of this wise Mother is the harm done to the weak by the strong, since to bring this process to pass, the strong man makes use only of gifts which he has received from nature; he does not, like the weak, take on a character different from his own; he merely utilises the sole effects of that with which nature has endowed him. Therefore everything resulting from that is natural. His acts of oppression, violence, cruelty, tyranny, injustice, all these diverse expressions of the character engraved in him by the hand of the power which placed him in this world are therefore quite

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as simple and as pure as the hand which drew them; and when he uses all his rights to oppress the weak, to plunder the weak, he is therefore only doing the most natural thing in the world. If our common mother had desired this equality that the weak strive so hard to establish, if she had really wanted the equitable division of property, why should she have created two classes, one weak, the other strong? Has she not, but this distinction, given sufficient proof that her intention was that it should apply to possessions as well as to bodily faculties? Does she not prove that her plan is for everything to be on one side, and nothing on the other; and that precisely in order to arrive at that equilibrium which is the sole basis of all her laws? For, in order that this equilibrium may exist in nature, it is not necessary that it be men who establish it; their equilibrium upsets that of nature. What, in our eyes, seems to us to go against it, is exactly that which, in hers, establishes it, and for this reason; it is from this lack of balance, as we call it, that are produced those crimes by which she establishes her order. The strong seize everything; that is the lack of balance, from man's point of view. The weak defend themselves and rob the strong; there you have the crimes which establish the equilibrium necessary to nature. Let us therefore not have any scruples about what we can filch from the weak, for it is not we who are committing a crime, it is the act of defence or vengeance performed by the weak which has that character. By robbing the poor, dispossessing the orphan, usurping the widow's inheritance, man is only making use of the rights he has received from nature. The crime would consist in not profiting from them: the penniless wretch that nature offers up to our blows is the prey that she offers the vulture. If the strong appear to disturb her order by robbing those beneath them, the weak re-establish it by robbing their superiors, and both are serving nature.

Going back to the origin of the right of property you inevitably arrive at usurpation. Theft however is only punished because it attacks the right of property, but this right is itself originally only a theft. Therefore the law punishes theft for

attacking theft, the weak for trying to get back their rights, and the strong for wanting to establish or augment theirs by profiting from what they have received from nature. Can a more terrible result exist anywhere in the world? As long as there is no legitimately established property (and there cannot be any) it will be very difficult to prove that theft is a crime, for what it upsets on the one hand, it immediately re-establishes on the other, and since nature is not any more interested in the first than in the second, it is absolutely impossible for anyone to prove that favouring one rather than the other constitutes any offence against her laws.

Therefore the weak man is right when in the attempt to get back his plundered possessions he purposely attacks the strong and enforces restitution. The only wrong that he may be doing is in deserting the character of weakness that nature has engraved in him. She created him to be poor and a slave, he does not wish to submit to this, and there is his wrong. The strong man, being mistaken to a correspondingly less extent, since he is abiding by his character and only acting in accordance with it, is equally right therefore in seeking to plunder the weak and to enjoy himself at his expense. Now let each of them look for a moment into the very depths of their hearts. The weaker, on deciding to attack the stronger whatever his rights may be will experience a slight struggle and this resistance to his getting his satisfaction comes from the fact that he is trying to go beyond the laws of nature by adopting a character which is not his own. The stronger, on the other hand, by despoiling the weaker, that is to say by enjoying all the rights which he has received from nature, by giving himself every possible licence, enjoys himself more or less in proportion to that licence. The more atrocious the harm he does the weaker, the more voluptuous the thrill he gives himself. He delights in injustice, he revels in the tears that his oppression wrings from the unfortunate, the more he tyrannises, the more he oppresses, the happier he is, because then he is making a fuller use of the gifts that he has received from nature, because the employment of these gifts becomes a necessity, and as a result

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of its voluptuousness. Furthermore, this necessary enjoyment which derives from the comparison that the fortunate man makes between himself and the unfortunate, this truly delectable enjoyment is never better established as far as the fortunate man is concerned than when the disaster that he produces is complete. The more he crushes the unfortunate, the more he heightens the value of the comparison, and consequently the more he nourishes his voluptuous delight. He has therefore two very real pleasures in his extortions from the weak: both the increase in his material funds, and the moral enjoyment of the comparisons he can make which become all the more voluptuous the more the wounds he inflicts weaken his victim. So let him pillage, burn, ravage, let him leave the poor wretch nothing but the breath to prolong a life whose existence is necessary to the oppressor in order to establish his laws of comparison. Everything that he does will be within the bounds of nature, everything he invents will be merely the use of the active forces that he has received from her, and the more he exercises these forces, the more he will fashion his pleasure, the better he will be employing his faculties, and consequently the greater service he will render nature.

'Allow me, dear young ladies,' went on Dorval, 'to support my arguments with a few examples;

'France was nothing but a vast thieves' kitchen under the feudal régime; only the form has changed, the effects are the same. No longer is it the great vassals who rob, it is they who are plundered, and the nobility, in losing their rights, have become the slave of the kings who conquered them.'*

* The equality prescribed by the Revolution is only the revenge of the weak upon the strong, that which formerly was the other way round, but this reaction is just, it is necessary that everyone has his turn. Everything will still vary, because nothing is stable in nature, and because the governments directed by men must, like them, be flexible. (Note added later)

The following passage indicates how Juliette, a typical de Sade character, derives extreme pleasure from destruction and pain which she has caused.

It is time, my friends, to speak to you a little about myself and above all to depict to you my luxury, the result of the most terrible orgies, so that you can compare it with the unfortunate state in which my sister found herself through having taken the trouble to behave well. You will draw from these comparisons whatever conclusions your philosophy will suggest to you.

The scale on which my house was run was enormous; you must have suspected it, in view of all the expense I was obliged to make for my lover: but leaving on one side the host of things demanded for his pleasures, I still had a magnificent house in Paris, a charming property beyond Sceaux, one of the most delightful little houses at Barrière Blanche, twelve tribads, four women of the bedchamber, a woman who read to me, two watch-women, three carriages, ten horses, four valets chosen for the superiority of their members, all the remaining attributes of a very large house, and for myself alone, more than two millions to spend every year after my house was paid for. Would you like the details of my life now?

I got up every day at 10 o'clock: until eleven I saw only my intimate friends, from then until one o'clock I carried out my full toilet, at which all my suitors were present; at one o'clock precisely I received private audiences concerning favours that people asked me for, or I received the Minister when he was in Paris. At two o'clock I flew to my little house, where excellent procuresses allowed me to find regularly every day four men and four women with whom I let all my caprices have the fullest rein.

In order to give you an idea of the type of people I received there, it should be enough for you to know that not a single individual entered the house who did not cost me at least 25 louis, and often twice as much; therefore you cannot imagine what delectable and rare creatures, of both sexes, I

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possessed. More than once I saw women and girls of the highest birth; and I can say that in this house I tasted pleasures that were most sweet and delights of a most refined nature. I returned home at four o'clock and always dined with a few friends. I will not speak to you about my table: no house in Paris knew meals served with such splendour, delicacy and profusion. Nothing was ever fine enough or rare enough: the extreme lack of moderation that you see in me should, I think, enable you to judge this. One of my greatest pleasures resides in this minor vice; and I imagine that without excess in this respect, you never enjoy others very much. After that I went to the theatre; or I received the Minister, if it was one of his days.

Concerning my wardrobe, my jewels, my savings and my furniture, although I had been with M. de Saint-Fond barely two years, I am not going too far in valuing these objects at more than four millions, two millions of which are in gold in my casket I love crime, and see all the means of crime at my disposition. Ah, my friends, how sweet is the thought. If I needed a new jewel, a new dress, my lover, who never wanted to see me more than three times in the same clothes, satisfied my wish immediately. . . and he did all that without demanding more from me than disorder, frenzy, libertinage, and the most excessive care in the arrangements for his daily orgies. It was therefore by appeasing my tastes that all my tastes were in fact served; it was in giving myself over to every irregularity of my senses that my senses were intoxicated. But in what moral situation had so much ease placed me? That is what I dare not say, my friends, but I must all the same come to an agreement with you about it. The extreme debauchery in which I plunged myself every day had deadened the reactions of the soul, to such an extent that, assisted by the pernicious advice that I received from all sides, I would not have deflected one ha'penny of my riches in order to restore life to an unfortunate woman. About this time a terrible famine made itself felt in the neighbourhood of my property; all the inhabitants were reduced to the greatest dis-

ress: there were some terrible scenes: young girls enticed into a life of debauchery, children abandoned and several suicides; people came to implore my help; I remained firm, and very impertinently lent colour to my refusals by referring to the enormous expense that my gardens had demanded of me. Can one give money to charity, I asked with insolence, when one causes boudoirs made of mirrors to be built in the depths of one's arbours, and when one's walks are embellished with statues of Venus, Cupid and Sappho? In vain was everything most likely to touch me shown to my unmoved countenance. . . Weeping mothers, naked children, spectres devoured by hunger; nothing disturbed me, nothing jolted my soul out of its normal state, and they obtained nothing from me but refusals. The result was that in taking stock of my sensations, I experienced, just as my teachers had instructed me, instead of the painful feeling of pity, a certain excitement, produced by the evil which I believed I was doing in rejecting these unfortunates, which set coursing through my nerves a flame almost similar to that which burns in us every time we shatter some restraint or subjugate some prejudice. From that moment I realised how much pleasure could be gained from putting these principles into effect; and it was then that I perceived that just as the spectacle of misfortune, caused by fate, could provide a sensual pleasure for souls disposed or prepared by principles such as those which had been instilled in me, so the spectacle of misfortune, caused by oneself, must heighten this enjoyment. As you know, my intelligence always penetrates deeply into things, and you cannot unagine what possibilities and delights this aroused in me. The reasoning was simple: I experienced pleasure merely by refusing to put the unfortunate into a happy situation; what therefore would I not experience if I were myself the prime cause of this misfortune. If it is sweet to oppose good, I said to myself, it must be delicious to commit evil. I recalled and cherished this idea in those dangerous moments in which the body takes fire from the pleasures of the spirit. . . Instantly in which one denies oneself all the less because then nothing opposes the irregularity

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of one's wishes or the impetuosity of one's desires, and the resultant sensation is only violent in proportion to the multitude of restraints that have to be broken, or to their sacredness. Once the illusion has vanished, if one became moderate again, the inconvenience would be mediocre: it is the story of the sins of the mind. It is obvious that they offend nobody, but unfortunately one goes further. What would the realisation of this idea be like, you venture to ask yourself, since its mere contact with my mind has moved me so deeply? You give life to the cursed illusion, and its existence is a crime.

A quarter of a league from my chateau there was a wretched cottage belonging to a very poor peasant named Martin-des-Granges, the father of eight children and the possessor of a wife who could be called a treasure for her wisdom and household management; would you believe that this sanctuary of misfortune and virtue excited my rage and my depravity?

Elvire and I had brought some Bologna phosphorus, and I had instructed this lively witty girl to entertain the whole family while I placed it skilfully among the straw in an attic situated above the bedroom of these unfortunates. I returned and the children caressed me, while the mother told me with great good nature all the little details about her home. The father wished me to take some refreshment; zealously he offered me all the hospitality at his disposal. . . None of that disarmed me, nothing softened me. . . . I redoubled the caresses I was bestowing on each member of this interesting family, into whose bosom I came bringing murder; my treachery was at its peak; the more I betrayed, the greater my ecstasy. I gave ribbons to the mother, sweets to the children. We went back, but my delirium was such that I could not go home without begging Elvire to relieve the terrible state in which I was. We hid ourselves in a thicket. We returned home, I was in a state that cannot be described, it seem to me that all disorders. . .all vices had simultaneously conspired together to debauch my heart; I experienced a sort of drunkenness. . .a sort of rage.I was heartbroken at having touched only so small a portion of humanity.

.
Returning to my boudoir we noticed the sky lit up.

'Oh! madame,' cried Elvire, opening a window. 'Look there. . .fire. . .a fire where we were this morning. . .'

And I fell almost senseless. . . Left alone with this beautiful girl.

'Let us go. . . ' I told her, 'I think I hear cries; let us go and savour this spectacle. . . Elvire, it is my work. . . I must see everything, I must hear everything, I do not want anything to escape me'.

We departed. . .both of us with our hair loose, our dresses crumpled, both inebriated: we resembled bacchantes. Twenty yards from this scene of horror, behind a little mound that concealed us from the eyes of others without preventing us from seeing everything, I fell once again into the arms of Elvir, himself almost as agitated as I was: in the glow of the homicidal flames that my ferocity had lit. . .to the shrill cries of suffering and despair that my lust had occasioned. . .and I was the happiest of women.

At last we got to our feet in order to investigate my crime. I saw with sorrow that two of the victims had escaped me; the other corpses I recognised, and I turned them over with my feet. 'These people were living this morning.' I told myself. . . In a few hours I had destroyed everything. . .all that to satisfy myself. . .so that then is what murder is! . . . a little disorganised matter. . .a few changes in combinations, a few molecules shattered, and flung back into the crucible of nature who will within a few days return them to earth in a new form. If I take life away from one, I give it to the other.If I had been all alone, upon my honour I do not know to what extremes I would have taken the effects of my disorder. The father and one of the children alone had escaped; the mother and the other seven were before my eyes. And I said to myself, as I looked on them. . .as I touched them even:

'I am the one who has just perpetrated these murders; they are the work of myself alone! . . .'

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. . . As for the house, there were the merest traces of it; one could hardly tell the place it had occupied.

Well now! Would you believe, my friends, that when I related this story of Clairwil, she assured me that I had but trifled with crime, and behaved like a coward.

"There are three or four serious faults in the execution of this adventure," she told me. 'Firstly,' (and I am repeating all this to you so that you may better judge the character of this astonishing woman) 'Firstly,' she said, 'you were at fault in your behaviour, and if unfortunately anyone had come. . . from your disorder. . . from your gestures. . . you would have been judged guilty. Beware of this fault; as much ardour as you like inside, but on the surface, the utmost phlegm. When you can in this way restrain the effects of your lust, they will have more force.

'Secondly, your mind failed to see the thing on a large scale; for you will agree that when you have under your windows an immense city and seven or eight huge villages round about, there is a certain moderation . . . a certain modesty, in confining your frenzies to a single house, and that in a very isolated place. . . from fear that the flames, by spreading, might increase the extent of your little atrocity.' I can see that you trembled when you committed it. And that therefore is an enjoyment spoiled, for those of crime will not permit restriction. I know them; if the imagination has not foreseen everything; if the hand has not accomplished everything, it is impossible for the delirium to be complete, because there will always remain a certain remorse. . . *I could have done more, and I did not.* And virtue's remorse is worse than that of crime: when you are accustomed to virtue and commit a bad deed, you always imagine that the host of good works will efface this stain, and since you can convince yourself easily of what you desire, you end up by calming yourself; but he who, like us, vigorously proceeds in the career of vice, never forgives himself a missed opportunity, because there is nothing to compensate him. Virtue does not come to his assistance; and the resolution that he makes to do something worse, by

further exciting his mind with evil will surely not console him for the chance to sin that he missed.

'Moreover, considering your plan only in outline,' continued Clairwil, 'there is still another great fault, for I would have followed up des Granges, myself. In his position he could have been burnt as an incendiary, and you will realise that if I had been in your place I would certainly not have missed that. When the house of an underling, as he was, on your estate, catches fire, are you not aware that you have the right to make enquiries through your justices whether or not he was guilty? How do you know that this man did not want to get rid of his wife and children in order to go and chase after women outside the district? As soon as he'd shown you his back you should have had him arrested as a fugitive, and handed him over to your justice as an incendiary. With a few louis you'd have found witnesses, Elvire herself would have done. She'd have testified that in the morning she saw this man roaming about in his attic, like a madman, that she questioned him and he couldn't answer her questions. And within a week they would have come and given you the voluptuous spectacle of seeing your man burnt at your own gate. May you profit from this lesson, Juliette, and never think of a crime without enlarging it; and while you are committing it, elaborate your ideas even more.'

Such, my friends, were the cruel additions that Clairwil would have wished to see me make to the crime that I confessed to her, and I will not conceal from you the fact that I was deeply affected by her reasoning, and promised myself faithfully never to fall into such grave errors again. The peasant's escape particularly grieved me, and I do not know what I would not have given to have seen him roasted at my gate. I have never consoled myself for this escape.

When de Sade visited Italy in 1775-6 he wrote many notes which are among the new manuscript discoveries and as yet unpublished. They were called *Descriptions critiques et philosophiques de Naples, Florence et leurs environs*. The following description of Florence, which occurs about half way through *Juliette* may perhaps have been based on these notes.

Permit me at this juncture, my friends, to speak to you for a moment about the superb city where we arrived shortly afterwards. These details will afford some respite to your imagination which has been sullied too long by my obscene stories: a diversion of this kind, it seems to me, can only make more piquant still that which truth, which you have demanded from me, will perhaps soon necessitate.

Florence, built by the soldiers of Sulla, embellished by the triumvirs, destroyed by Totila, rebuilt by Charlemagne, enlarged at the expense of the ancient town of Fiesole, of which only the ruins can be seen today, the prey for a long time of internal revolution, subjugated by the Medici, who, after ruling for two hundred years, allowed it to pass in the end to the house of Lorraine, is now ruled, along with Tuscany, of which it is the capital, by the Archduke Leopold, brother of the Queen of France,* a despotic prince, proud and ungracious, vile and libertine like all his family, as my accounts will soon inform you.

The first political observation that I made on arriving at this capital was to feel convinced that the Florentines still regretted their native princes, and that it was not without suffering that they had submitted to foreigners. The simple exterior of Leopold does not inconvenience anyone; all the superiority of Germany can be seen, in spite of his popular dress, and those who know the spirit of the house of Austria know very well that it will always be much easier to simulate virtues than to acquire them.

* It should be noted that these details were correct when Madame de Lorsange (Juliette) travelled through Italy. We are aware of the changes which have occurred since in this town as well as in other parts of this beautiful country. (Note added later.)

Florence, situated at the foot of the Appenines, is divided in two by the Arno, this central part of the capital of Tuscany resembles somewhat the part of Paris which is traversed by the Seine, but it would need much for the town to be as populated and as big as the one to which we compare it for a moment. The brown colour of the stones which serve for the construction of its palaces gave it a mournful look which is displeasing to the eye. If I had liked churches I would no doubt have had some fine descriptions to give you, but the horror I have for everything connected with religion is so strong that I do not allow myself to go into any of these temples. It was not the same story as far as the superb gallery of the Grand Duke was concerned, I went to see it the day after I arrived. I will never be able to communicate to you the enthusiasm that I felt in the midst of these works of art. I love the arts, they bring warmth to my mind, nature is so beautiful that one should cherish all that imitates her. Ah! can we encourage too much those who love and copy her! The only way to snatch from nature some of her secrets is to study her unceasingly. It is only by examining her in her most secret corners that you can reach the annihilation of prejudice. I adore a woman with talent, her appearance can seduce but her talents attach, and I think that for one's *amour-propre* the latter are more important than the former.

My guide, as you can easily imagine, did not fail to stop me at the room which is part of this celebrated gallery, where Cosimo I of the Medici was surprised in a somewhat singular deed. The famous Vasari was painting the ceiling of this apartment when Cosimo came in with his daughter, with whom he was very much in love. Not suspecting that the artist was working high up in the rafters, this incestuous prince caressed the object of his love in a fashion which left no room for doubt. A couch presented itself. Cosimo took advantage of it, and the act was consummated before the eyes of the painter who from that very moment fled from Florence, certain that violent means would be used to stifle such a secret, and that anyone who knew it would soon be placed in a position where

he could not speak. Vasari was right, he lived in a century when Machiavellianism was making progress; he was wise in not exposing himself to the cruel results of this doctrine.

Not far from there I was shown an altar in solid gold, adorned with fine precious stones which I could not see without coveting. These immense riches, it was explained to me, were an ex-voto offering that the Grand Duke Ferdinand II, who died in 1630, offered to Saint Charles-Borromé in order to regain his health. The gift was in course of construction when the prince died; the descendants decided somewhat philosophically that, since the saint had not granted the wish, they were under no obligation to recompense him, and they caused the treasure to be brought back. How exaggerated do the fruits of superstition become, and how could one ascertain with truth that among all human follies this one is without doubt that which degrades most our mind and our reason?

I went from there to the famous *Venus* by Titian, and I confess that my senses were more moved by the contemplation of this sublime picture than they were by Ferdinand's ex-voto offering: the beauties of nature interest the soul, religious extravagances make it tremble.

Titian's *Venus* is a beautiful blonde woman, with the finest eyes one could possibly see, features somewhat clear-cut for a blonde, whose charms seem to need softening by the hand of nature as well as her character. You see her on a white couch, scattering flowers with one hand, hiding her charming little sex with the other. Her pose is voluptuous, and you do not weary of examining the details of this sublime picture. Sbrigani found that this *Venus* had a prodigious resemblance to Raimonde, one of my new friends; he was right. That beautiful creature blushed innocently when we told her, and a fiery kiss that I bestowed on her rosy mouth convinced her to what point I approved my husband's comparison.

In the following room, called the Chamber of the Idols, we saw an infinite number of masterpieces by Titian, Veronese and Guido . . . A strange idea is carried out this room. You can see a tomb full of corpses, in which you can observe

all the different degrees of decomposition from the moment of death to the total destruction of the individual. This sombre work is executed in wax which is coloured so naturally that nature could not be more expressive nor more exact. The impression is so strong that as you look at this masterpiece the senses appear to respond simultaneously: unconsciously you put your hand over your face. My cruel imagination was diverted by this spectacle. How many people had my wickedness made to suffer these terrible transformations? . . . Let us go on: nature no doubt inclined me to these crimes, since she delights me still simply through the recollection of them.

Not far from there is another sepulchre of plague victims, where the same degrees of change can be seen; you notice there especially one wretched man, entirely naked, carrying a dead body that he is throwing down with the others and who, suffocated by the stench and the sight he sees, falls over backwards and dies; this group expresses a terrifying truth.

Next we passed on to things more gay. The room, known as the tribune, offered us the famous *Medici Venus*, which was placed at the back. It is impossible, on seeing this superb piece of work, not to succumb to the most pleasant emotion. A Greek, they say, fell in love with a statue. . . I confess, that being near this one I could have imitated him; as you examine the beauty of the details in this celebrated work you can easily believe that, as tradition states, the sculptor must have needed five hundred models in order to finish it; the proportions of this sublime statue, the charms of the face, the divine contours of each limb, the graceful curves of the bosom and the hips, are the strokes of genius which could rival nature, and I doubt whether three times as many models, chosen among all the beauties of the earth, could today supply a creature who would not lose by the comparison. The general opinion is that this statue shows us the maritime Venus of the Greeks. I shall not dwell longer on a piece of which there have been so many copies. . . Religious superstition in the past caused this fine work to be broken. . . The idiots! they worshipped the creator of nature and thought they were serving him in

destroying his finest work. People are by no means agreed on the name of the sculptor; general opinion attributes this masterpiece to Praxiteles, others believe it made by Cleomenes: no matter, it is beautiful, people admire it, it is everything necessary to the imagination and whoever may be its creator, the pleasure you take in admiring the work is none the less on eof the most pleasant you can experience.

My eyes alighted from there on the *Hermaphrodite*. You know that the Romans, who were all passionately interested in this type of monster, admitted them by preference in their licentious orgies; this one, no doubt, was one of those whose reputation for lubricity was the best established; it is unfortunate that the artist, in representing the legs as crossed, did not want to show what characterises the double sex.

Close by is a group consisting of *Caligula embracing his sister*; these proud masters of the universe, far from concealing their vices, caused them to be immortalised by the arts.

We were shown some chastity belts. And at the menace that I made to my two friends that I would clothe them in similar garments in order to be sure of them the tender Elise assured me delicately that she only needed the love that I inspired her to be kept within the limits of the most precise type of temperance.

Next we saw the finest and most strange collection of daggers; some of them were poisoned; no race has brought so much refinement to murder as the Italians; it is therefore very easy to see among them everything that can serve this deed, in the most cruel and treacherous manner.

LA PHILOSOPHIE DANS LE BOUDOIR

LA PHILOSOPHIE DANS LE BOUDOIR

Published in 1795 as a 'posthumous work by the author of *Justine*', *La Philosophie dans le Boudoir*, which consists of seven dialogues, describes the initiation of a young girl into the art of love making. Towards the end de Sade contrived to introduce the *famous Français, encore un effort*, a 22,000 word pamphlet which it had been hoped to reproduce here in its entirety, but this was found to be not possible. During the 1848 Revolution in France the pamphlet was reprinted and circulated as propaganda material.

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*Menhmen, yet one more effort, if you wish to be
republicans*

RELIGION

I come to offer you some great ideas, you will listen to them and reflect upon them. If all do not find favour, some at least will prevail. I will have made some contribution to the progress of enlightenment, and I will be satisfied. I do not hide the fact, in any way, I am grieved to see the slowness with which we strive to reach our goal. With anxiety I sense that once again we are on the point of missing it. Is it conceivable that we shall have reached this goal, when we have been given laws? Let no one think so. What shall we do with laws without religion? We need a faith, a faith suited to the republican character and far removed from ever possibly resuming that of Rome. In an age when we are so convinced that religion must rest upon morality, and not morality upon religion, we need a religion in tune with our way of life, as it were the development, the inevitable extension of it, a religion which can elevate the soul and keep it perpetually at the level of that precious liberty which it venerates today as its only idol.

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Oh, you who hold the sickle in your hands, deal the last blow against the tree of superstition! Do not be content with pruning the branches, tear out completely a growth which has such contagious effects. Convince yourselves entirely that your code of liberty and equality is too openly opposed to the ministers of Christ's altars for a single one of them ever to adopt it in good faith, or not to seek to dislodge it if it should gain some hold upon men's consciences. Where is the priest, who, comparing the state to which we have just reduced him with that which he enjoyed before, would not try everything within his power to regain both the confidence and the authority which have been taken away from him? And what weak cowardly creatures would soon become again the slaves of our ambitious cleric? Why do people not realise that the discomforts of the past can still be born anew? When the Christian church was in its infancy, were priests not what they are today? You see to what they had attained! But what had brought them so far? Was it not the means that their religion furnished? If now you do not prohibit this religion absolutely, its preachers, possessing still the same means, will soon reach the same goal. Therefore wipe out for ever what can one day destroy your work. Remember that the fruits of your labours will only be husbanded by your descendants, and it is your duty not to bequeath them one of these dangerous seeds which could hurl them back into the chaos from which we escaped with so much difficulty. Frenchmen, do not stop here, all Europe waits, with one hand already on the bandage which hypnotises her eyes, for the effort you must make to tear it from her forehead. Hasten, do not grant to Holy Rome, who is agitating on all sides to quell your power, the time in which perhaps still to preserve some proselytes. Strike without circumspection her haughty quivering head and within two months the tree of liberty can overshadow the ruins of St. Peter's pulpit, overlay with the weight of its victorious branches the . . . idols of Christianity, so impudently raised upon the ashes of Cato, Brutus, and their kin.

Frenchmen, I repeat, Europe is waiting for you to free her from both the sceptre and the censer. Remember you cannot possibly deliver her from royal tyranny without breaking at the same time her fetters of religious superstition. The bonds of one are too intimately linked with the other for you to let one of the two survive, and not fall back quickly beneath the domination of the one you have neglected to dissolve. No longer should a republican bow down at the feet of either an imaginary being or a vile impostor. His only gods should be *courage* and *liberty*. Rome disappeared as soon as Christianity was preached there, and France will be lost if she believes in it again.

Look closely at the absurd dogmas, the frightening mysteries, monstrous ceremonials and impossible ethics of this . . . faith, and you will see if it can suit a republican.

To convince ourselves of this truth, let us look at the few individuals who remain attached to the . . . cult of our fathers. We shall see if they are not all the irreconcilable enemies of the present system, we shall see if their numbers do not entirely compose that so justly despised caste of *royalists* and *aristocrats*. The slave of a crowned brigand may, if he likes, bow down before a plaster idol; such a thing is made for his muddy soul; who serves kings must adore gods! But for us Frenchmen, for us, my countrymen, to cringe beneath such contemptible restraints! Rather die a thousand times than submit to them again! Since we believe a cult to be necessary, let us imitate that of the Romans. Exploits, passions, heroes—these were the object of their veneration. Such idols elevated and electrified the soul. They did more, they communicated the virtues of the worshipped being. The devotee of Minerva wished to become wise; courage was in the heart of the man who was seen at the feet of Mars. Not a single god of these great men lacked power. All passed on the fire that raged within them to the soul of their worshipper. And as he had the hope of being himself adored one day, he aspired to become at least as great as the one he took for a model. . . . But

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what, on the other hand, do we find in the Gods of Christianity?

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Is it in pure theism that we shall find more motive for greatness and ambition? Will the adoption of a chimera give our soul that degree of strength essential to the republican virtues and lead man on to foster or to practice them? Do not believe it. We have turned away from this ghost. Atheism is now the only system for all men capable of reasoning. The greater our enlightenment the more our realisation that as motion is inherent in matter the agency needed to induce that motion had become an illusory being; since everything that existed had to be in motion from its very essence, a prime mover was unnecessary. . .

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Let the total extermination of all cults therefore be added to the principles that we are propagating for all Europe. Do not be content with breaking sceptres, pulverise the idols for ever. It has always been but one step from superstition to royalism. It must undoubtedly be so indeed since one of the first articles of the consecration of kings was the maintenance of the dominant religion as one of the political bases which would best support their thrones. But now that the throne has toppled down happily for ever, do not be afraid to eradicate in the same way the foundation upon which it rested.

Yes, citizens, religion is inconsistent with the code of freedom. This you have felt. Never will the free man bow to the gods of Christianity; never will its dogmas, rites, mysteries and ethics suit republicans. Yet one more effort. You are working to destroy all prejudices, so do not leave one of them untouched. How much more certain must we be of their return if the one you allow to exist is the very cradle of all the others.

Let us stop thinking that religion can be useful to man. Once we have good laws we can do without religion. But, we are assured, the people need it, it diverts them, and restrains them. Excellent! Then in that case give us a religion suitable

for free men Bring us back the pagan gods. Willingly will we adore Jupiter, Hercules or Pallas—but no more of this fabulous author of a universe which sets itself in motion, no more of this infinite god who nevertheless fills everything with his immensity, a god all powerful who never achieves what he desires, a being supremely good who creates only malcontents, the friend of order whose government is all in chaos No, we want no more of a God who upsets Nature, who is the father of confusion, and who moves mankind at the moment when man abandons himself to horrible deeds Such a God makes us shudder with indignation, and we consign him once and for all to that oblivion from which the infamous Robespierre wished to recall him

Frenchmen, substitute in place of this phantom those imposing images which made Rome the mistress of the universe Let us treat all these Christian idols as we treated those of our kings We have replaced the emblems of liberty on the foundations which formerly supported tyrants Let us similarly erect again the effigies of great men on the pedestals of those rascals loved by Christianity Let us cease to fear the effect of atheism upon our villages Have not the peasants realised the need for annihilating the catholic cult, which is so contradictory to the true principles of liberty? Have they not seen without either fear or sorrow their altars and their presbyteries overthrown?

Statues of Mars, Minerva and Liberty will be installed in the most important places in their homes an annual fête will be celebrated there every year, the laurels will be awarded to the citizen who has deserved the best from his fatherland At the entrance to a lonely wood Venus, Hymen and Love will be erected beneath a rustic temple, there to receive the homage of lovers, and there beauty will crown constancy with the hand of the graces

The fact of loving will not alone be enough to be worthy of this crown, it will still be necessary to have deserved it, heroism, talents, humanity, greatness of soul, proof of patriotism—those are the titles that the lover at the feet of his beloved will be made to establish, and they will be equally as valuable

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as those of birth and wealth which a foolish pride demanded formerly. At least some virtues will blossom from this cult, whereas only crimes spring from that which we had the weakness to profess. This cult will march hand in hand with the liberty we serve; it will inspire it, fortify and cherish it, where theism, by its nature and its essence, is the most deadly enemy of the liberty we serve.

Was one drop of blood spilt when the pagan idols were destroyed under the Eastern Empire? The revolution was prepared by the stupidity of a race that had again been enslaved, and was effected without the least hindrance. How can we fear that the process of philosophy will be more painful than that of despotism! It is only the priests who keep this people whom you fear so much to enlighten still kneeling in submission to their chimerical God. Remove them from the people and the veil will fall of its own accord. Have faith that this people, who are so much wiser than you imagine, released now from the shackles of the tyrants, will soon be freed from superstition. You are afraid of them if they lack this restraint! What! Oh! believe this, citizens, that the man who is not deterred by the physical sword of the law, will be no more held back by the moral fear of the tortures of Hell, which he has braved alone since his childhood. In one word, your theism has caused many atrocities to be committed but never prevented a single one.

If it is true that we are blinded by passions, that their effect raises a cloud before our eyes, disguising from us the dangers which surround them, how can we suppose that anything which is remote from us, such as the punishments decreed by your God, can succeed in dispersing this cloud which the very sword of the law, always suspended above the head of passion, cannot remove? If it is proved then that this supplement of constraints imposed by the idea of a god becomes useless, and its other effects are proved to be dangerous, I ask what purpose it can serve, and for what motives we can support the continuation of its existence.

Will it be said that we are not yet mature enough to con-

solidate our revolution in a way so striking? Fellow citizens, the road we have trod since 1789 was difficult in another way from that which lies ahead of us. Public opinion will need much less stirring for what I now propose to you than it has done since the time of the storming of the Bastille when we have had to whip it up on every hand. Let us believe that a nation wise enough and brave enough to drag an impudent monarch from the peak of grandeur to the foot of the scaffold, a nation which in these few years could conquer so many prejudices and break loose from so many ridiculous restraints, will be wise enough and brave enough to sacrifice a phantom even more illusory than the shadow of a king to a real good, to the prosperity of the republic.

Frenchmen, you will strike the first blows. Your national education will do the rest. But hasten with this task, make it one of your most important aims, and above all base it upon that essential morality which is so neglected in religious education Instruct your children to cherish those virtues which were hardly mentioned formerly and which, without your religious fables are sufficient for their individual happiness. Make them realise that this happiness consists in making others as happy as we would like to be ourselves. by making them feel that virtue is only necessary because their personal happiness depends on it, they will become honest folk through selfishness, and this law which governs all men will always be the surest of all. Avoid therefore, with the utmost care, including any religious fables in this national education. Never lose sight of the fact that it is free men we wish to mould, and not base worshippers of a god. Let a simple philosopher tutor these new pupils in the incomprehensible sublimities of Nature, let him prove to them that the knowledge of a god, often dangerous to men, never furthers their happiness, and that they will not be any happier by accepting as the cause of something they do not understand something they understand still less. It is far less essential to understand nature than to enjoy her and respect her laws. These laws are as wise as they are simple, they are written in the heart of every man, and he need only

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ask his heart the question to discover their motive. If men insist on hearing about a creator, tell them that things have always been as they are, have never had a beginning, and since they never need to have an end it is therefore as useless as it is impossible for a man to go back to an imaginary origin which explains nothing and profits him nothing. Tell them that it is impossible to have a true idea of a being who makes no impression on any of our senses. All our ideas are representations of objects which we find striking; what can represent to us the idea of a god which is evidently an idea without an object? Is not such an idea, you add, as impossible as an effect without a cause? What can an idea without a prototype be, except an illusion? Some doctors, you will continue, assert that the idea of a god is innate, and men possess it from their mother's womb. But that is false, you will add. Every principle is a judgment, every judgment is the consequence of experience, and experience is acquired only by the exercise of the senses. It follows from this, obviously that religious principles are related to nothing and are not in any way inborn. How could reasonable beings, you will continue, ever have been persuaded that the most difficult thing for them to comprehend was the most essential to them? Because they have been greatly frightened, and when man is afraid, he ceases to reason. Above all, because they have been advised to suspect their reason, and conflict in the mind gives rise to faith in anything and analysis of nothing. Tell them again that ignorance and fear are the twin foundation of all religions.

The uncertainty in which man finds himself over his relationship with his God is precisely the motive which attaches him to his religion. Man is afraid in the darkness, physically as much as morally; fear becomes habitual in him, and develops into need. If he had nothing more to hope for or to fear, he would believe that something was lacking. Finally you must return to the usefulness of morality. On this great subject give them many more examples than lessons, many more proofs than books, and you will make good citizens of them, good soldiers, good fathers and good husbands. You will make them

men all the more attached to their country's freedom, because their minds will never again be confronted with the idea of slavery, their spirit never troubled with religious terror. Then real patriotism will break out in every heart, reigning in all its might and purity because it will become the only dominating sentiment there, its force unshaken by any foreign principle. Then, you can be certain of your second generation, and your work, consolidated by it, will become the law of the universe. But if through fear or cowardice these counsels are not followed, if you leave standing the foundations of an edifice you thought had been destroyed, what is going to happen? The building will rise again upon the same foundations, the same colossal figures will be erected there, with the cruel difference that this time they will be cemented with such strength that neither your generation nor those to come will succeed in overthrowing them. Let no one doubt that religions are the cradle of despotism. The first of all the tyrants was a priest. Numa and Augustus, the first king and the first emperor of Rome, were themselves associated with the priesthood; Constantine and Clovis were abbots rather than sovereigns; Heliogabalus was the priest of the Sun. In every age there was such a close link between despotism and religion that it is all too obvious that by destroying one you must undermine the other, for the very important reason that the first will always serve as law to the second. But I do not propose, all the same, massacres or deportations—all such horrors are too foreign to my heart for me to dare imagine them even for a moment. No, no assassination, no deportation; these atrocities are proper to kings or the criminals who imitate them. By copying them you will not impress with horror those who carried them out before. Use force only for the idols—those who serve them need only ridicule. The sarcasms of Julian harmed the Christian religion more than all the tortures of Nero. Yes, let us make the priests into soldiers. Some are soldiers already. Let them stick to a profession that is so noble for a republican, but do not let them talk to us again about their chimerical being, or his fabulous religion. . .

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MORALS

Having proved that theism is in no way suitable for a republican government, it seems to be necessary to show that French morals are no more suitable either. This question is all the more important since it is morals which will provide the motives for the laws that are in the making.

Frenchmen, you are too enlightened not to realise that a new government is going to need new morals. No citizen of a free State can possibly behave like the slave of a despotic king; the difference between their interests, their duties and the relationships among themselves essentially prescribe an entirely different mode of conduct in society. A host of petty errors and small social offences, which were considered very essential under the government of kings, whose demands were greater as their need to impose restraints was greater in order to make themselves inaccessible and worthy of their subjects' admiration, will become meaningless now. Other crimes, known by the names of regicide and sacrilege, must vanish under a government which no longer knows either kings or religion in the same way in a republican state. Reflect, citizens, that by granting liberty of conscience and of the press, you come very close to granting freedom of action; except for anything which has a direct effect upon the foundations of the constitution there are innumerable less crimes for you to punish, because in fact there are very few criminal actions in a society founded upon liberty and equality. If you consider and examine matters closely, the only truly criminal act is what is punished by the law, because nature's promptings, which impel us equally towards vice and virtue by reason of the way we are made, or, more philosophically still, by reason of her need for either one or the other, would be a very certain yardstick for the precise measurement of what is evil. But, for the better development of my ideas on so essential a theme, we shall classify the different actions in the life of man that have up to the present been regarded as criminal, and then we shall measure them up together against the true duties of a republican.

At all times a man's duties have been considered in three different groups as follows:

1. Those dictated by his conscience and credulity in relation to the Supreme Being.
2. Those that he is obliged to fulfil in relation to his fellow-men.
3. Finally those that relate only to himself.

We should now be certain that there is no god with any interest in us, and that we are creations made necessary by nature, like plants and animals, being in this world because it was impossible for us not to be in it. This certainty undoubtedly destroys with one blow, as can be seen, the first part of these duties, those, I mean, for which we falsely hold ourselves responsible to the Deity. All religious transgressions vanish with them, all those known by vague and indeterminate names such as *impiety, sacrilege, blasphemy, atheism*, etc. all those in fact for which Athens punished so unjustly *Alcibiades*, and France the unfortunate *Labarre*.

Let us now turn to the second class of man's duties, those binding him to his fellows. This class is the most extensive of all.

Christian morality, which is too vague about man's relationship with his fellow men, lays down foundations so full of sophistries that we cannot possibly admit them, because if you wish to construct principles you must avoid basing them on sophistries. This . . . morality tells us indeed to love our neighbour as ourselves. Certainly nothing would be more sublime—if something which is false can ever possess the characteristics of beauty. There is no question of loving our fellows as ourselves because that is against the law of nature, and our whole lives must be directed only by her agency. It is only possible to love our neighbours as friends given to us by nature, and with whom she should live all the better in a republican State because the disappearance of distinctions must necessarily strengthen our ties.

Henceforth let humanity, fraternity and benevolence pre-

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scribe for us our reciprocal duties, according to these principles, and let us fulfil them each with the simple degree of energy that nature granted us for that purpose without blaming, and above all without punishing, those colder, more splenetic characters who do not find in these ties, touching though they are, all the sweet rewards experienced by others. For it will be agreed that it would be a palpable absurdity in this case to wish to lay down universal laws. Such a procedure would be as ridiculous as if the general of an army wished to dress all his soldiers in uniforms of the same size. It is a terrible injustice to expect men, whose temperaments are unequal, to bind themselves to identical laws; what suits one does not suit another.

I recognise that it is impossible to make as many laws as there are men, but the laws could be so easy and so small in number that all men, whatever their natures, could easily submit to them. I would further demand that this small number of laws be of the kind that is easily adaptable to every different character, the guiding principle being to strike in varying degrees, according to the individual to be affected. It is clear that the practice of particular virtues is impossible for certain men, as there are particular remedies which do not suit certain temperaments. Would it not, therefore, be the height of injustice for you to bring down the law upon a man incapable of submitting to it?

Would not the iniquity you would thereby commit be as great as that of which you would be guilty if you tried to force a blind man to distinguish colours?

It follows from these first principles, one feels that it is necessary to make the law mild and above all to eliminate forever the atrocity of the death penalty, because the law is by its very nature cold and cannot be moved by passions which in a man may justify the cruel act of murder. Man receives impulses from Nature which enable him to pardon this act, but the law on the other hand is always in opposition to Nature and receives nothing from her. It has no authority to permit itself the same motives, and cannot possibly have the same rights. These are learned and subtle distinctions

which escape many people because very few people think, but they will be welcomed by the educated audience I am addressing, and will have an influence, I hope, upon the new code that is in preparation.

The second reason for abolishing the death penalty is that it has never stamped out crime, which goes on every day at the very foot of the gallows!

This punishment must be removed in fact, because there is no worse calculation than to kill a man for having killed another. The obvious result of this procedure is that where before there was one man less, suddenly there are two less, and only executioners and imbeciles can be familiar with such arithmetic.

Be that as it may, the sins that we can commit against our brothers can be reduced in the end to four main groups; *calumny*, *theft*, offences proceeding from *impunity* which can disagreeably affect others, and *murder*.

All these actions were considered capital offences in a monarchical régime, are they so serious in a republican State? We shall analyse this question in the light of philosophy, for only in this way should such an examination be conducted. Do not accuse me of being a dangerous innovator, or tell me that there is a risk of softening the action of remorse on the conscience of the wrongdoer, as may perhaps be caused by these words, that it would be overwhelmingly wrong to increase the tendency to crime in the heart of the same wrongdoer by the mildness of my morality. I formally testify here that I have no such perverse intentions. I am expounding ideas which have crystallised within me since the age of reason, ideas whose flow, for so many centuries, has been opposed by the infamous despotism of tyrants; so much the worse for those who would be corrupted by these great ideas, so much the worse for those who can only fasten upon the evil in philosophical views, which are capable of being corrupted to any need. Who knows if these people would not perhaps be poisoned by reading Seneca and Charron? It is not to them that I speak. I only speak to those capable of understanding me, and they will read my words without danger.

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I confess with the utmost frankness that I have never believed calumny to be wrong, especially in a constitution like ours where all men are closer to each other, more intimately linked, and obviously have a greater interest in knowing one another better. There are two possibilities; calumny is either directed against a truly wicked man or it lights upon a man of virtue. It will be agreed that in the first case it makes hardly any difference if a little more evil is spoken about a man already known for his many sins. It may even happen then that the non-existent evil will throw a little light upon that which does exist, and then will the evildoer be better known.

Imagine there is an unhealthy influence in Hanover, but that exposing myself to this inclement air the only risk I run is catching a bout of fever. Would I have any grievance against a man who told me, in order to stop me going, that a visit there would kill me? No, without a doubt, for by frightening me with a major evil, he has prevented me from suffering a minor one.

What, on the other hand, when calumny strikes the virtuous man? There is nothing to be alarmed about, let him show himself and all the venom of the slanderer will soon rebound upon himself. For such people calumny is but a purifying test from which their virtue will only emerge more radiant. There is even some profit in this for the total sum of virtues in a republic, because the sensitive and virtuous man, stung by the injustice he has just experienced, will devote himself to even better efforts. He will wish to triumph over this calumny from which he thought he was protected, and his good actions will only acquire a further degree of strength. Thus, in the first case the slanderer will have produced good enough results in exaggerating the vices of the dangerous man, and in the second he will have produced excellent results in forcing virtue to display itself in its entirety.

Therefore I ask you now in what respect you can have anything to fear from a calumniator, especially in a State where it is essential to distinguish the wicked and to increase the power of the good? So beware then of pronouncing any penalty

against calumny, and regard it in two ways, as a warning light and as a stimulant, and in any case as something very useful. The legislator whose ideas must all be of the same magnitude as the work on which he is engaged, must never study the effect of crime in its individual aspect only. It is the mass effect which must be examined, and when he observes the effects resulting from calumny in this light, I defy him to find in them anything to punish; I defy him to be able to attach any shadow of justice to the law which punishes it. On the other hand he will be the most just and upright of men if he favours and rewards it.

Theft is the second of the moral wrongs which we propose to scrutinise.

If we scan the records of antiquity we shall see that theft was allowed, rewarded, in all the republics of Greece. Sparta and Lacedaemonia openly favoured it; several other nations regarded it as a soldierly virtue; it is certain that it fosters courage, strength, dexterity, all the virtues in fact useful to a republican constitution, and consequently to our own. I would dare to ask, without partiality now, whether theft, the effect of which is to equalise wealth, is a great evil in a State whose aim is equality? Surely not, for if it maintains equality on one side, it makes the other side more scrupulous in preserving its wealth. There was one nation which punished not the thief but him who let himself be robbed, in order to teach him to look after his property. This leads us to a wider field of reflection.

God forbid that I wish here to attack or destroy the oath of respect for property lately taken by the nation; but may I be allowed a few ideas on the injustice of this oath? What is the essence of an oath sworn by all the individuals of a nation? Is it not the maintenance of perfect equality between citizens, the equal submission of all to the law protecting the property of all? And therefore I now ask if a law is very just which orders the man with nothing to respect the man with everything? What are the elements of the social pact? Do they not consist in the surrender of a small part of your liberty and

property in order to preserve and safeguard what you retain of both?

All laws rest on these foundations; they are the motives for the punishments inflicted on the man who abuses his freedom; in the same way they authorise taxation. The reason why a citizen does not cry out against the demands made upon him is that what he gives is the means for safeguarding what remains to him. But, once again, by what right shall the man with nothing bind himself to a contract that protects only the man with everything? If you are performing an act of equity in defending the property of the rich with your oath, are you not doing an injustice in extracting this oath from a defender who has nothing? What interest is there for the latter in your oath? Why do you want him to promise something in favour only of the man who differs from him so much by his riches? Surely there is nothing more unjust: an oath should have an equal effect on all who take it. It is impossible for it to bind a man with no interest in keeping it, for then it would no longer be the agreement of a free people; it would be the weapon of the strong against the weak, and against that the latter should rebel unceasingly. Now that is what happens in the oath of respect for property that the nation has just demanded; the rich alone bind the poor with it, the rich alone have an interest in this oath, which the poor swear without reflecting that this vow, extorted from their good faith, is the means of engaging them to do something that cannot be done on their behalf. Convinced then as you must be of this barbarous inequality, do not aggravate your injustice by punishing him who has nothing for daring to steal something from him who has everything. Your inequitable oath gives him more right to this than ever. In making him perjure himself with this oath, which for him is so absurd, you justify every crime to which this perjury may lend him. You no longer have the right to punish that of which you were the cause. I need say no more to make you realise the horrible cruelty of punishing thieves. Emulate the wise law of the nation I have just mentioned; punish the man so negligent as to let himself be robbed,

but do not threaten punishment against the robber. Realise that your oath has authorised this action for him, and that in giving in to it he is only following the first and most sacred impulse of Nature, self-preservation at no matter whose expense.

We shall now examine in this second class of man's duties towards his fellows those offences made up by the acts which may be undertaken by debauchery; among these we can particularly distinguish as injurious to the individual's duties towards others *prostitution, adultery, incest, rape, and sodomy*. Surely we can have no doubt that all so-called moral crimes, that is to say all acts of the type of those which we have just cited must be of no consequence in a State whose sole duty consists in preserving by whatever means possible the form essential to its maintenance; that is the sole ethic in a republican State.

Since therefore it is always opposed by the despots which surround it, you cannot reasonably imagine its means of maintenance to be *moral means*, for it can only maintain itself by war, and nothing is less moral than war.

Now, I question how one can succeed in proving that in a State obliged to be *immoral* it is essential for the individuals to be *moral*? I will go further—it is good if they are not. The legislators of Greece were perfectly aware of the importance of the need to corrupt its members so that their *moral dissolution* upon that useful to the machine would result in that insurrection which is always indispensable in a government which, completely happy like a republican government, must necessarily excite hatred and jealousy in all who surround it. Insurrection, these wise legislators considered, is by no means a *moral* state; it should be however the permanent state of a republic. It would therefore be as absurd as it would be dangerous to demand that those who must maintain the perpetual *immoral* ferment of the machine should themselves be *moral* beings. The reason is that the moral state of a man is one of peace and calm, whereas his immoral state is one of perpetual motion which reconciles him with that necessary

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insurrection in which the republican must always maintain the government of which he is a member.

Let us now begin our detailed study with an analysis of modesty, this cowardly emotion so opposed to impure attachments. If it had been Nature's intention that man should be modest surely she would not have caused him to be born naked. A multitude of peoples, less degraded than we are by civilisation, go naked and experience no shame. There can be no doubt that the use of clothing is based solely upon both the inclemency of the weather, and the coquetry of women; they realised that they would soon lose all the effects of desire if they anticipated them instead of letting them develop; they agreed that in addition nature had not created them without faults, and that they would so much better assure themselves of the means of pleasing by disguising these faults with ornaments. And so modesty, far from being a virtue, was nothing but one of the first effects of corruption, one of the first weapons of female coquetry.

Lycurgus and Solon, in the firm conviction that the results of immodesty maintained the citizen in the immoral state essential to the laws of the republican constitution, obliged young girls to appear naked at the theatres. Rome copied this example; there was dancing in the nude at the Games of Flora. The greatest part of pagan mysteries were celebrated in this manner; nudity even passed as a virtue among several peoples. Be that as it may immodesty gives birth to luxurious tastes; the results of these tastes compose the so-called crimes that we are analysing and the first effect of which is prostitution. Now that we have completely turned our backs upon the host of religious errors which enslave us, and in greater intimacy with nature, thanks to the destruction of an army of prejudice, we listen only to her voice, in complete assurance that if anything is criminal it is rather resisting the tastes that she awakes in us than fighting them; in the belief that lust was a consequence of these tastes, we are much less concerned with extinguishing these passions in ourselves than regulating the means of satisfying them in peace. We must therefore apply

ourselves to setting up some order in this sphere and establishing in it all the security necessary for the citizen who is impelled by need towards objects of lust to be able to abandon himself with these objects to all that his passions prescribe for him without ever being fettered by anything because there is no passion in man with a greater need for the full extension of liberty than this one. In the towns diverse institutions will be built, healthy, vast, suitably equipped and reliable in every respect. I must explain this still further, measuring it against republican morals; I have promised the same logic throughout, I will keep my word.

If, as I have said just now, no passion has greater need for the full extension of liberty than this one, undoubtedly no other is as despotic. It is in this that man loves to command, to be obeyed, to surround himself with slaves forced to satisfy him. Now every time you fail to give a man the secret means of working off the dose of despotism that Nature has placed in the depths of his heart he will turn round and exercise it on the objects which surround him, he will trouble the State. If you wish to avoid this danger, give full scope to these tyrannical desires which despite himself unendingly torment him. Contented by the exercise of his petty sovereignty in the centre of the harem of pashas and sultanas that your cares and his money put at his disposal, he will come away satisfied, with no desire to trouble a government that assures him so complacently every means of satiating his lust. But if, on the contrary, you employ different procedures, if you clutter these objects of public incontinence with all the ridiculous obstacles formerly invented by the tyranny of ministers and the lubricity of our Sardanapales, the man will soon become embittered with the government, jealous of the despotism you impose on him, and weary of your manner of ruling him. Then he will change it, as he has just done.

See how the Greek legislators, imbued with these ideas, dealt with debauchery in Lacedaemonia, in Athens. Far from banning it, they intoxicated the citizen with it. No form of lasciviousness was forbidden him, and 'Socrates, declared by

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the oracle to be the wisest of the earth's philosophers, passing indifferently from the arms of Aspasia to those of Alcibiades, was none the less the glory of Greece. I shall go even further, and however contrary my ideas are to our present customs, since it is my aim to prove that we must hurry up and change our customs if we wish to maintain the government we have adopted.

Firstly, by what right do you claim that women should be excepted from that blind submission to the caprices of men which nature prescribed for them and next, by what right do you claim to subject them to a continence that is both physically impossible for them, and of absolutely no value to their honour?

I shall treat each of these questions separately.

It is certain that in the state of Nature women are born *vulgivagus*. Such were, without doubt, both the first laws of Nature and the only institutions made by the first assemblies of men. *Profit, egotism, and love* degraded these first designs, such simple and such natural designs. You hoped to get rich by taking a woman and her family's wealth with her—satisfying the first two feelings I have just cited. More often still you carried off this woman and became attached to her; that is the second motive in action, and in every case, there is injustice.

An act of possession can never be exercised over a free being. The exclusive possession of a woman is as unjust as the ownership of slaves; all men are born free, all are equal in their rights. Never forget these principles. According to them, therefore, no one sex can ever be granted a legitimate right to take exclusive possession of the other, and one of these sexes or one of these classes can never possess the other arbitrarily.

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These chimerical methods are meaningless. We have seen earlier that modesty was an artificial and contemptible emotion. Love, which may be called the *madness of the soul*, has no better claim to justify their constancy. It only satisfies two individuals, the lover and the loved; it cannot serve the happi-

ness of others, and it is for the happiness of everyone, not for an egoistic, privileged happiness, that we have been given women.

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We must unquestionably recompense these women that we have so cruelly enslaved, and it is this which will form the answer to the second question that I posed myself.

If we admit, as we have just done, that all women must be subject to our desires, we can undoubtedly allow them in the same way full satisfaction of all their own. On this point our laws should favour their ardent temperaments and it is absurd to measure both their honour and their virtue by the anti-natural strength they use to resist those inclinations which they have received in greater lavishness than we have; this moral injustice is all the more heinous in that we agree at the same time to weaken them by force of seduction and then to punish them for surrendering to the efforts we have made to provoke this fall. The whole absurdity of our morals, it seems to me, is delineated in this inequitable atrocity, and this single example ought to make us realise the urgent need we have to change them for others of a purer character.

I say then that women, endowed with far more violent tastes for sexual pleasures than ourselves, should be able to give in to them as much as they wish. Women must have the liberty equally to enjoy all whom they think worthy of giving them satisfaction.

Oh enchanting sex! You will be free. Like men you will enjoy all the pleasures that nature has created your duty. There will be no restrictions on any of them for you. Why should the most divine half of humanity be chained up by the other? Break your fetters, nature wishes it. Have no other restraints than those of your appetites, no other laws than your desires alone, no other morality than that of Nature. Do not languish any longer in your barbaric prejudices that despoil your charms and enslave the divine raptures of your way of life. You are free like ourselves, as free to make a career on the battlefields of Venus as we are. No longer need you fear absurd reproaches,

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pedantry and superstition have been swept away. No longer need you blush for your charming escapades, we will crown you with myrtle leaves and roses. The admiration we shall cherish for you will simply be in proportion to the greater extent you allow for your adventures.

Among the Tartars, the more a woman prostituted herself, the more she was honoured. She wore openly around her neck the marks of her immodesty, and those who had no such decorations got no respect. In Pegu, families offered their wives or daughters to travellers and strangers, they were hired at so much per day like horses or carriages! I could fill volumes with examples showing that lust was never held to be criminal by any of the wise races of this earth.

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But what of sodomy now, this so-called crime which drew the fires of heaven down upon the towns addicted to it?

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What is the only crime which may be found in this? Surely it is not the placing of ourself in this or that part--unless you would maintain that all the parts of the body are different and some are pure and others defiled. Since it is impossible however to put forward such absurdities, the only crime which can be alleged in this connection is loss of seed. Now I ask you if it is at all probable that this seed can appear so precious to Nature's eyes that it is impossible to waste it without committing a crime? If that were so, would she give us everyday occasion for such a wastage? Does she not justify it by permitting it in dreams, or in the act of enjoying a woman who is already pregnant? Can we possibly imagine Nature giving us the possibility of committing a crime which would offend her? Could she ever consent to let men destroy their pleasures, and thereby become stronger than her? It is astonishing into what pitfalls of absurdity you tumble if, in reasoning, you abandon the guiding light of reason.

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The taste for sodomy is the result of our organism and we contribute nothing*to this organism. Sometimes it is the

fruit of satiety, but, even in that instance, is it any the less a part of Nature? It is her work, whichever way you look at it, and in all circumstances what she inspires should be respected by men. If an accurate census were to prove that this taste is infinitely more widespread than the other, that its pleasures are much more entrancing, and that for that reason its disciples are a thousand times more numerous than its enemies, could you not then conclude that far from outraging Nature this vice serves her purposes, and that she is far less adamant about procreation than we so foolishly believe? Now, if we scan the whole world, do we not find many races that despise women? There are some that only make use of them for producing the children necessary for replacing them. The habit of living all together, which is natural to republican citizens, will always make this vice more frequent in States of this kind, but it is certainly not dangerous. If the Greek legislators had believed it to be so, would they have introduced it into their republic? Far from thinking that, they believed it necessary for a warrior nation. Plutarch enthusiastically tells us of the regiment of the *lover* and the *loved*; for a long time they were the sole defenders of Greece. This vice was supreme in the brotherhood of men in arms and cemented their allegiance. The greatest of men were addicted to it. The whole of America, when it was discovered, was peopled with tribes which shared this taste. In Indiana, among the Illinois, male Indians dressed as women prostituted themselves like courtesans. The negroes of Benguela openly kept men. Almost all the brothels of Algiers today are inhabited mainly by young boys. At Thebes they were not content with merely tolerating the love of young boys, they commanded it. The philosopher of Cheronas prescribes it to moderate the love of young people.

We know the degree to which it flourished in Rome. There were public places there where young boys prostituted themselves dressed as girls, and girls as boys. Martial, Catullus, Tibullus, Horace and Virgil wrote to men as to their mistresses, and we even read in Plutarch that women should have no part in the love of men. The Amasians of the Isle of Crete some-

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times kidnapped boys with the most singular ceremonies. If they loved one, they notified the parents of the day the ravisher would abduct him. The young man offered some resistance if his lover was not to his liking, but when this was not the case he went off with his seducer who returned him to his parents as soon as he had made use of him—for with this passion, as with that of women, you have always had too much when you have had enough.

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Strabo tells us that on this same island the seraglios were filled only with boys. They were publicly offered as prostitutes.

Listen to *Jerome the Peripatetician*. "The love of boys," he tells us, "was widespread throughout Greece because it inspired courage and strength, and contributed to the downfall of tyrants. Lovers formed conspiracies among themselves, and would rather let themselves be tortured than reveal their accomplices, thus sacrificing everything in their patriotism to the prosperity of the State. It was commonly accepted that these liaisons strengthened the republic, and women were decried. Attachment to such creatures was a weakness reserved for despotism". Pederasty has always been the vice of warlike people. Caesar informs us that the Gauls were extraordinarily addicted to it. The separation of the two sexes resulting from the wars which republics had to suffer propagated this vice, and when the usefulness of its consequences to the State was recognised it was soon consecrated by religion. We know that the Romans sanctified the loves of Jupiter and Ganymede. *Sextus Empiricus* assures us that the Persians were ordered to indulge in this fancy. Finally the women, despised by the men and jealous, offered to render their husbands the same service that their young boys gave them. Several of them tried it but returned to their former habits, finding the illusion was not possible.

The Turks have strong leanings towards this depravity which Mohammed sanctified in his *Koran*.
Sixtus V and Sanchez permitted this debauch.
Eventually the women found compensation with each other.

This fancy is undoubtedly no more harmful than the other because its only effect is the refusal to reproduce, and those who have the taste for procreation possess sufficiently powerful means to prevent its adversaries from doing harm. The Greeks even supported this perversion among women by reasons of State. One of its consequences was that women, finding satisfaction among themselves, had less frequent communication with men, and thereby did not harm the affairs of the republic. Lucian tells us what progress this licence made, and it is not without interest that we can see it in *Sappho*.

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We must expect sufficient wisdom and sufficient prudence from our legislators that we can be quite certain that they will not issue any law for the repression of these misfortunes, which are solely due to the organic structure and can never make anyone addicted to them any more to blame than is the individual whom Nature has created deformed.

All that remains for us to examine in this second category of man's crimes against his fellow men is murder, and then we shall pass on to his duties towards himself. Of all the wrongs a man can do to his fellow men, murder is indisputably the cruellest because it takes away the only good that Nature has provided, the only one whose loss is irreparable. Leaving aside, however, the evil that murder causes to its victim, several questions arise in this context:

1. Is this deed really criminal in respect of the laws of Nature only?
2. Is it criminal in relation to the laws of the republic?
3. Is it harmful to society?
4. How should it be considered in a republican State?
5. Finally, should murder be suppressed by murder?

We shall examine each of these questions separately. The subject is essential to such a degree that we may be allowed to linger over it. Perhaps our ideas will be considered somewhat outspoken. What does that matter? Have we not acquired the right to say everything? We have great truths to expound to men. They expect it of us, the time has come for error to dis-

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appear, for its bandage to fall beside that of our kings. Is murder a crime in the eyes of Nature? That is the first question to be raised.

Undoubtedly we are now going to humiliate man's pride by reducing him to the level of all the other creatures of Nature, but the philosopher does not flatter petty human vanities. Ever zealous in the pursuit of truth he singles it out from among the foolish prejudices of self-conceit, seizes it, and develops it resolutely before the eyes of the astonished world.

What is man, and what difference is there between him and the other animals of the earth? Decidedly, none. Like them he was placed upon this globe by chance. Like them he is born, like them he propagates, increases and decreases. Like them he endures old age and disappears into oblivion at the end of the term which Nature has allotted to each species of animal by reason of the structure of its organs. If the comparisons are so exact that it is impossible for the scrutiny of the philosopher to distinguish any dissimilarity, then it will always be as wrong to kill an animal as to kill a man, or else as unimportant. It is only in the prejudices of our vanity that we discern any degree of significance, and, unfortunately, nothing is so absurd as the prejudices of vanity. But let us press the question. You cannot deny that it is all the same to destroy a man or a beast. But is not the destruction of any living animal decidedly an evil, as the Pythagoreans believed, and as certain inhabitants on the banks of the Ganges still believe? Before replying to this, let us remind our readers that we are only examining this question in relation to Nature. We will consider it after in relation to man.

Now I ask what price Nature can place upon individuals which cost her nothing in either suffering or attention? The workman only values his work by virtue of the labour he employs in its creation. Does man cost Nature anything? Even supposing that he does, does he cost any more than a monkey or an elephant? I will go further. What are Nature's regenerating materials? What is the composition of beings who

become alive? Are not the three elements that form them originally the product of the destruction of other bodies? If every individual was eternal, would it not become impossible for Nature to create new ones? If the immortality of beings is impossible for Nature, then their destruction becomes one of her laws.

If then this destruction is so useful to her that she cannot possibly dispense with it and if she cannot progress to new creation without drawing upon the masses of decay prepared for her by death, then from this instant the idea of annihilation that we attach to death ceases to be real. There will no longer be any definable annihilation. What we call the end of the living creature will no longer be a real end, but a simple transmutation, the basis of which is perpetual motion, the veritable essence of matter, which all modern philosophers accept as one of their prime laws. According to these irrefutable principles then, death is nothing more than a change of form, an imperceptible transition from one existence to another, in fact, what Pythagoras called metempsychosis.

Once you have accepted these truths, I wonder if you can ever propose that destruction is a crime? Will you dare to tell me, with the idea of preserving your absurd prejudices, that transmutation is destruction? Surely not. To do that you would need to prove that there is a moment of inaction in matter, an instant of pause. Now you will never discover this moment. Small creatures are formed the moment that the breath leaves the larger creature, and the life of these small beings is only one of the necessary effects determined by the momentary sleep of the larger. Will you dare to say now that one pleases Nature more than the other? For that you would need to prove an impossible thing, namely that the long or squared form is more useful, more agreeable to Nature than the oblong or triangular form. You would need to prove that with respect to the sublime designs of Nature a lazybones growing fatter and fatter with inactivity and indolence is more useful than a horse, whose service is so essential, or than a bullock, whose body is so precious that not a single part of it

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is unserviceable. You would need to say that the venomous serpent is more necessary than the faithful dog.

Now, as all these propositions are untenable, you must therefore admit without reservation that it is impossible for us to annihilate the works of Nature; in complete certainty that all that we are doing when we offer ourselves up to destruction is merely instituting a variation in form which cannot extinguish life. You are led on and on by this series of deductions we are making, each one developing out of the others, until at last you must admit that the act you commit in varying the forms of Nature's different works, far from harming her, is advantageous to her by providing her in this way with the raw material for her reconstructions.

Well then, leave it to her, people say. Of course you must leave it to her, but it is her promptings that a man follows when he turns to homicide, it is the advice of Nature that he obeys. The man who destroys his fellow is to Nature what pest or famine is, all equally her agents. She makes use of every possible means to obtain as soon as possible this kind of destruction which is absolutely essential for her works. Let us condescend for a moment to let the sacred torch of philosophy illuminate our minds. Who else but Nature whispers to us of personal hatreds, vengeance, wars, in fact all the everlasting motives for murder? If she advises them then, she must need them. How then can we suppose ourselves guilty towards her when all that we are doing is following her plans?

That is more than enough to convince every enlightened reader that it is impossible for murder ever to outrage Nature.

Is it a crime politically? On the contrary, we are not afraid to admit that it is unfortunately only one of the main-springs of political principles. Was it not by means of murders that Rome became the mistress of the world? Was it not by means of murders that France is free today? You do not need to be warned here that we are speaking only of murders occasioned by war, and not of the atrocities committed by the disciples of faction and disorganisation, devoted to public execration, who have only to be recalled to stir up general

horror and everlasting indignation. What human science has more need to sustain itself by murder than that which only exists by deceit, and has as its sole aim the aggrandisement of one nation at the expense of another? Are wars, the only fruit of this barbarous policy, any more than the means to nourish it, strengthen it and buttress it? And what is war if not the science of destruction? And how strange that man can be so blind as to teach openly, the art of killing, reward its most successful practitioners, and punish those who for private reasons dispose of their enemies! Is it not time to make good such barbaric misinterpretations?

And now, is murder a crime against society? What reasonable person can ever think that? Oh! what does it matter to a society so numerous if it contains one member more or less? Would that vitiate its laws, its morals or its customs? When has the death of an individual ever influenced the general mass? Would the losses of the greatest battle ever, I might say, the extermination of half the world, its totality, if you like, cause the slightest material alteration to the small number of beings who would survive? Alas! No. Nature in her entirety would not even be affected, and the foolish vanity of the man who believes that everything is done for him would be vastly shocked to see that after the total destruction of humankind nothing is changed in nature and the stars do not even falter in their courses. Let us continue.

How should murder be considered in a republican and warlike State?

It would undoubtedly be utterly dangerous either to view this deed with disfavour or to punish it. A republican's pride demands a little ferocity. If he grows soft, if his strength diminishes, he will soon be subjugated. And here a very singular thought occurs to me, but as it is true I shall tell you of it despite its boldness. A nation which begins to govern itself as a republic will only keep itself alive by virtue, because in order to reach the top, you must always begin at the bottom. But a nation which is already old and corrupt when it courageously throws off the yoke of monarchical government to adopt

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a republican constitution will only maintain itself by plenty of crime. For it is already steeped in crime, and if it wished to change from crime to virtue, that is to say from a violent to a peaceful state, it would fall into inertia, the result of which would soon be certain ruin. What would happen to a tree if you transplanted it from soil teeming with life to an arid sandy plain? All intellectual ideas are so subordinated to the physical laws of Nature that comparisons drawn from agriculture will never mislead us in questions of morality.

The most independent of men and those closest to Nature are savages; with impunity they devote themselves to murder every day. In Sparta, or in Lacedaemonia, they hunted helots as we in France hunt partridges. The freest peoples are those who accept murder most easily. In Mindanao the man who commits murder is raised to the rank of the braves; he immediately receives the award of a turban. Among the Caraguos you must have killed seven men to merit the honour of this head-dress. The inhabitants of Borneo believe that those they put to death will serve them when they are no more. Even devout Spaniards make a promise to St. James of Galicia to kill a dozen Americans a day. In the kingdom of Tangut a strong and vigorous young man is chosen who is allowed on certain days of the year to kill everyone he meets! Was any race more friendly towards murder than the Jews? You find it in all its forms on every page of their history.

From time to time the Emperor and the mandarins of China took steps to make their people revolt so as to obtain by these manoeuvres the right to carry out a horrible massacre. If this soft and effeminate nation ever frees itself from the yoke of these tyrants they will be slaughtered in their turn with much greater reason. Murder, always chosen and always necessary, will only have made a change of victims. From being the happiness of some, it will become the delight of others.

An infinity of nations tolerated public assassination. It was completely permissible in Genoa, Naples, Venice, and throughout Albania. At Kachao, on the San-Domingo River, the murderers, in a recognised established costume, will slay,

at your orders and before your very eyes, any individual you point out to them. Indians take opium in order to bolster up their murderous desires, and fling themselves into the streets, massacring everyone they meet. English travellers have also discovered this mania in Batavia.

What people was at one and the same time greater and more cruel than the Romans, and what nation preserved its splendour and its freedom longer? It sustained its courage with spectacles of gladiators, and became warlike through its habit of making a sport of murder. Every day twelve or fifteen hundred victims filled the arena at the circuses, and the women there, more cruel than the men, dared to demand that the dying fell with grace, and distinguished themselves even in their death agonies. From that the Romans passed on to the pleasures of watching midgets cutting each other's throats in public. Then when the Christian cult infected the earth and persuaded men that killing was a sin, this race at once became enslaved by tyrants, and the heroes of the world soon became its puppets.

Everywhere in fact, the murderer, that is, the man who suppresses his scruples to the point where he kills his fellow and risks private or public vengeance, everywhere, I say, such a man is always considered very courageous, and consequently precious to a warrior or republican State. Let us glance at those races which are even more violent and are only satisfied by child sacrifices, very often of their own children. We shall see that acts of this kind are universally adopted, and are sometimes even made part of the law. Several savage tribes kill their infants as soon as they are born. On the banks of the River Orinoco the mothers believe that their daughters are born only to a most miserable existence, being destined to be the wives of the savages of this country who do not tolerate women. Therefore they kill their female children as soon as they have brought them into the world. In Trapobanis and the kingdom of *Sopil* all deformed children were sacrificed by the parents themselves.

The women of Madagascar exposed those of their children that were born on certain days of the week to savage beasts.

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In the Greek republics all new-born children were carefully examined to see whether they possessed the possibility of one day defending the republic; if they did not conform to this requirement they were immediately slain. They did not judge it necessary there to maintain richly endowed houses for the preservation of this vile scum of human nature. Until the transference of the Imperial Throne all Romans who did not wish to foster their children threw them to the cesspits. In the past legislators had no scruples about consigning children to their death, and none of their codes ever suppressed the rights that a father considered himself to own over his family. Aristotle favoured abortion, and these ancient republicans, filled with enthusiasm and zeal for the fatherland despised this compassion for the individual which is found in modern nations. They loved their children less, but loved their country better. Every morning in every town in China you will find an incredible number of children abandoned in the streets. A wagon scoops them up at daybreak, and they are cast into a ditch. Frequently the midwives themselves relieve the mothers of their offspring by plunging them immediately into tubs of boiling water, or throwing them into the river

In Peking the children are placed in little reed baskets and abandoned on the canals; the famous traveller Duhalde assesses the number lost at a daily total of more than 30,000. It cannot be denied that it is absolutely necessary and extremely politic to stem the population under a republican government. For entirely opposite reasons, under a monarchy, the population must be encouraged, since tyrants are only rich in proportion to the number of their slaves and therefore they definitely need men. But let us have no doubts about it, this abundance of population is a real vice in a republican state. However, it is not necessary to slaughter the people in order to reduce their numbers, as our modern decemvirs have been saying.* It is merely a question of not allowing them the means of propagating themselves beyond the limits dictated to them by their happiness. Take care not to multiply too far a people

* Robespierre. (Trans.)

of which each individual is a sovereign, and rest assured that revolutions are never anything more than the result of a too numerous population. If, for the glory of the state, you grant your warriors the right to destroy men, grant also, for the preservation of the same state, the right to each individual to allow himself as far as he wants, since he can do so without flying in the face of nature, the right to dispose of the children whom he cannot support or who cannot be of any use to the state. Allow him also the right to dispose of, at his own risk, all the enemies who can do him harm, because the result of all these actions, entirely valueless in themselves, will be to maintain your population at a moderate level, and never let it be numerous enough to upset your state. Let the monarchists say that a country is only large because of its big population. This country will always be poor if its population exceeds its means of existence and it will be always flourishing if it contains itself within its proper limits and can dispose of its surplus. Do you not prune a tree which has too many branches, and in order to preserve the trunk do you not cut off the boughs? Every theory which diverges from these principles is folly, the abuses of which would soon lead us to the total overthrow of the edifice we have just built up with so much difficulty. But it is not when the man has grown up that you must destroy him in order to reduce the population. It is unjust to shorten the days of a well-formed individual; it is not unjust, I say, to prevent the existence of a being who will certainly be useless in the world. The human species should be purified from the cradle. What you can see as never capable of being useful to society should be torn out of its midst. Those are the only reasonable motives for reducing a population whose over-large extent is, as we have just proved, the most dangerous of abuses.

It is time to sum up.

Should murder be suppressed by murder? No, certainly not. Let us never impose any punishment on the murderer except the risk he may run through the vengeance of the friends or relations of the man he killed. *I forgive you*, said Louis XV to Charolais, who had just killed a man for his own amuse-

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ment, *but I also forgive the man who will kill you.* All the foundations of the law against murderers can be found in this sublime remark.

In fact, murder is a horror, but it is a horror often necessary. But must it be considered as a deed committed in order to be punished with death? Those who reply to the following dilemma will have answered the question satisfactorily:

Is murder a crime or not?

If it is not a crime, why make laws to punish it? If it is a crime, by what barbarous and stupid inconsistency would you have it punished by a similar crime?

It remains for us to speak of the duties of man towards himself. Since the philosopher only assumes these duties inasmuch as they serve his pleasure or his preservation, it is completely useless to recommend their practice to him and even more useless to impose punishment on him if he fails.

The only crime that man can commit in this respect is suicide. I shall waste no time in proving the stupidity of those people who regard this action as a crime. I refer those who may still have some doubts about this to the famous letter by Rousseau. Almost all the ancient governments authorised suicide on behalf of politics and religion. The Athenians explained to the Areopagus the reasons they had for killing themselves. They stabbed themselves afterwards. All the republics in Greece tolerated suicide. It entered into the plan of the ancient legislators. People killed themselves in public and their deaths were regarded as a fine spectacle.

The Roman republic encouraged suicide. The famous examples of devotion to the state were only suicides. When Rome was conquered by the Gauls, the most illustrious senators gave themselves up to death; in assuming the same spirit again we are adopting the same virtues. During the campaign of '92, a soldier killed himself through chagrin at not being able to follow his comrades to the battle of Jemmapes.* When we

* A small town in Belgium, where the French were victorious against the Austrians. (Trans.) *

place ourselves immediately at the height of these proud republicans, we will soon surpass their virtues. It is the state that makes the man. Such a long habit of despotism had completely sapped our energy. It had undermined our way of life, and now we are being reborn. We shall soon see of what sublime acts the French genius and character is capable, when it is free. Let us uphold, at the cost of our fortunes and our lives, this liberty which is already costing us so many victims. We shall regret nothing if we reach our goal. These victims all devoted themselves willingly; do not let us make their bloodshed vain. But unity, unity, . . . or we shall lose all the fruit of our labours. Let us found excellent laws on the victories which we have just won. Our first legislators, who were still the slaves of the despot whom we have finally overthrown, had only given us laws worthy of this tyrant, whom they still worshipped. Let us do their work anew, remembering that at last we are going to work for republicans. May our laws be as mild as the people they are to govern.

In explaining here, as I have just done, the emptiness, the indifferen^t nature of an infinity of actions that our ancestors, regarded as criminal, I reduce our work to very little. Let us make few laws, but let them be good ones—there is no question of multiplying restrictions, it is a question only of giving an indestructible quality to that which we use—

may the laws we make have as their only aim the citizens' peace of mind, his happiness and the glory of the republic. But after having driven the enemy from your lands, Frenchmen, I would not want the ardour of propagating your principles to take you any further. It is only with fire and sword that you will be able to carry them to the ends of the earth. Before acting on these resolutions, remember the unfortunate end of the crusades. When the enemy is on the other side of the Rhine, believe me, guard your frontiers and stay at home. Revive your trade, bring back energy and outlets to your manufactures. Make your arts flourish again, encourage agriculture, so necessary under a government such as yours; its spirit should be able to supply the whole world, without need-

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ing anyone. Let the thrones of Europe crumble of their own accord. Your example and your prosperity will soon overthrow them without your needing to do anything about it.

When you are invincible at home and a model for all countries through your policy and your fine laws, there will not be one government in the world which will not try to imitate you, not one which will not be honoured by associating with you; but if, for the empty glory of carrying your principles further, you abandon the care of your own happiness, despotism, which is only sleeping, will be born again, you will be torn apart by internal strife and you will have exhausted your finances and your soldiers. All that merely to embrace once more the chains which tyrants, having subjugated you in your absence, will impose on you again. All that you wish for can come to pass without there being any need for you to leave your hearths; may other peoples see your good-fortune and they will hasten towards happiness by the same road that you have traced out for them.

IDEE SUR LES ROMANS

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This essay, given here in its entirety, was written in 1800 as a preface to *Les Crimes de l'Amour*, the collection of stories which had been first published earlier. It adds greatly to our knowledge of de Sade's background shows the extent of his reading, and in particular his appreciation of contemporary writers. De Sade attempts a reasoned analysis but, as in most of his attempts, the writing soon takes on an emotional and personal tone.

In the introduction that he wrote in 1881 to *Dorci ou la Bizarrerie du Sort*, one of the stories intended for *Les Crimes de l'Amour*, Anatole France wrote 'He was intelligent; in his *Idée sur les Romans* there are some judicious remarks and a reasonably good literary sense'.

* * * * *

ESSAY ON THE NOVEL

The name *roman*, or in English novel, is given to an imaginative work made up of the most outstanding adventures in the life of men.

But why does this type of work bear the name *roman*?

In what nation should we seek its origin, and which ones are the most celebrated?

And finally what are the rules that must be followed to achieve perfection in the art of writing it?

Those are the three questions that we propose to discuss; let us begin with the etymology of the word.

As there is nothing to tell us the name given to this composition by the peoples of antiquity, we should only devote ourselves, it seems to me, to discovering the reason why it bears for us the name that we still give it.

The Romance tongue was, as we know, a mixture of celtic idiom and latin in use by the first two dynasties of our kings. It is reasonable enough to believe that works of the type of

which we are speaking, composed in that language, should bear its name, and that one should speak of *une romane* to define a work concerned with humorous adventures, as one spoke of *une romance* to express plaintive ballads of the same type. It would be in vain to seek a different etymology for this word; common sense offering no other, it would seem simple to adopt it.

Let us pass then to the second question.

In what nation should we seek the origin of this kind of works, and which ones are the most celebrated?

The common belief is that it is to be found in the Greeks, from whom it passed to the Moors, was taken from there by the Spaniards who next transmitted it to our troubadours from whom our chroniclers of chivalry received it.

Although I respect this filiation and sometimes submit to it I am however far from adopting it strictly; is it not in fact a very difficult line of descent in eras when so little was known about travelling, and communications were so often interrupted? There are some fashions, customs, and tastes which are not transmitted; inherent in all men, they are born naturally with them. Wherever men exist traces of these tastes customs and fashions recur.

Let us not be in any doubt about this: it was in the countries which first recognised the Gods that novels found their source, and consequently in Egypt, the undeniable cradle of all cults. Men had hardly *suspected* the existence of immortal beings before they made them act and speak; from then onwards we see metamorphoses, fables, parables, novels: in fact we see works of fiction, as soon as fiction seizes upon the mind of men. We see fabulous books, as soon as there is any question of fancies: when nations, led first by the priests, after having been sacrificed for their fantastic divinities, finally took up arms for their king or their country, the homage offered to heroism counterbalances that of superstition. Not only are the heroes, and very wisely, put in the place of the Gods, but songs praise the sons of Mars just as they had celebrated those of heaven. The narrator embellishes the great actions of their

lives, or weary of feeding upon them, creates characters who resemble them. . . who surpass them, and before long new novels appear, doubtless more probable, and created much more for man than those that only celebrated phantoms.

Hercules,* a great captain, was to fight his enemies gallantly, there we see the hero and history. Hercules destroying the monsters and leaving in twain the giants, there we see the god. . . the fable and the origin of superstition, but of a reasonable superstition, since its only basis is the reward of heroism, and the gratitude due to the liberators of a nation; whereas that which coins unformed and never-glimpsed beings has only fear, hope, and disorder of the mind as its motive. Thus every people had its gods, its demigods, its heroes, its true stories and its fables; something as we have just seen may have been true in what concerned the heroes; as for the rest it was all imagined, fabulous, the work of invention, it was all a novel, because the gods only speak through the organ of men more or less interested in this ridiculous artifice, who did not fail to constitute the language of the phantoms of their minds from everything that they imagined to be most likely to inspire fascination or fear, and consequently most fabulous. 'It is an accepted belief,' said the scholarly Huet, 'that the name of novel was formerly given to histories, and has since been applied to fictions, which is an incontestable proof that the latter have developed from the former'.

Thus there were novels written in every tongue, in every nation, the style and facts of which are seen to be closely traced both onto the national customs and onto the accepted opinions of these nations.

Man is subject to two weaknesses which pervade his existence and characterise it. Everywhere he needs *to pray*, everywhere he needs *to love*, and those are the bases of all novels. He made them in order to depict the beings whom he *beseeked*,

* Hercules is a generic name, composed of two celtic words, *Her-Coule*, that is to say master captain. *Hercoule* was the name of the general of the army, which multiplied infinitely the number of *Hercoules*; the fable then attributed to one person the miraculous deeds of several. (See the History of the Celts, by Peloutier.)

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he made them also to celebrate those whom he *loved*. The former, dictated by terror or hope, had to be sombre, gigantic, full of falsehoods and fictions; such were the ones composed by Esdras during the Babylonian captivity. The latter, filled with refinements and sentiments, such as the story of Theagenes and Chariclea, by Heliodorus. But since man *prayed* and *loved* everywhere, in every part of the globe on which he dwelt, there were novels, that is to say works of fiction which sometimes depicted the fabulous objects of his worship, sometimes the more real ones of his love.

It is not therefore necessary to apply yourself to finding the source of this type of writing in this or that nation of your choice. You should be convinced by what has just been said that all have more or less used it, in proportion to the greater or lesser inclination that they have felt for either love or superstition.

Now for a rapid glance at the nations which have most welcomed these works, at the works themselves, and at those who have composed them. Let us follow the thread up to the present day so as to enable our readers to establish some ideas of comparison.

Aristeides of Miletus is the most ancient storyteller mentioned in antiquity, but his works no longer exist. We know only that his tales were called the *Milesiarchs*. A reference in the preface to the *Golden Ass* seems to prove that the productions of Aristeides were licentious. 'I am going to write in this fashion' said Apuleius at the beginning of his *Golden Ass*.

Antonius Diogenes, a contemporary of Alexander, wrote in a more polished style of the loves of Dinias and Dercillis, a story full of fictions, sorceries, voyages, and highly extraordinary adventures, that le Seurre copied in 1745 in a small work that was even more remarkable, for not content like Diogenes to make his heroes travel to known countries he marches them off sometimes to the moon, sometimes to Hell.

Next followed the adventures of Sinonis and Rhodanis by Iamblicus; the loves of Theagenes and Chariclea, that we have just mentioned; the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon; the loves of

Daphnis and Chloe of Longus; those of Ismen and Ismenia, and many others, either translated, or totally forgotten in these days of ours.

The Romans, more inclined to criticism and to malice than to love or prayer, were content with a few satires such as those of Petronius and Varro that we should be careful not to classify as novels.

The Gauls, more subject to the two weaknesses, had their bards, who may be regarded as the first story-tellers of the part of Europe in which we live today. The profession of these bards, says Lucan, was to write in verse the immortal deeds of the heroes of their race, and to sing them to the accompaniment of an instrument resembling the lyre; very few of these works are known to our times.

We had next the deeds and exploits of Charlemagne, attributed to Archbishop Turpin, and all the tales of the Round Table, the Iristans, the Lancelots of the Lake, and the Percevals, all written with the intention of immortalising well-known heroes, or to invent them from those who with the embellishments of imagination surpassed them in marvels. But what a distance there is between these works, long, tedious, and riddled with superstition, and the Greek narratives which had preceded them! What barbarism and vulgarity followed the tasteful stories filled with agreeable fictions which the Greeks had given us as models, for although there had undoubtedly been others before them, at that time at least no others were known.

The troubadours appeared next, and although they must be regarded rather as poets than as story-tellers, the abundance of delightful tales that they composed in prose will however secure them a fair and rightful place amongst the writers we are discussing. If you need to be convinced cast a look at their *fabliaux* written in the Romance tongue during the reign of Hugh Capet, and copied with such alacrity by Italy.

This beautiful region of Europe, still groaning under the Saracen yoke, still far from that epoch in which it was to become the cradle of the Renaissance of the arts, had almost

no story-tellers at all until the tenth century. They appeared gradually at the same time as our troubadours in France and imitated them. But let us venture to come to an agreement about this glory, it was not the Italians who became our masters in this art, as Laharpe* says (page 242, Vol. 3), but on the contrary it was by us that they were moulded; it was at the school of our troubadours that Dante, Bocaccio, Tasso, and even to some extent Petrarch, sketched out their compositions. Almost all the tales of Bocaccio are to be found in our fables.

It is not the same with the Spaniards. Instructed in the art of fiction by the Moors, who themselves had it from the Greeks, all of whose works of this kind they possessed, translated into Arabic, the Spaniards created delectable novels, which were imitated by our writers, and we shall return to them.

As gallantry took on a new aspect in France, the novel reached perfection, and it was then, that is to say at the beginning of last century, that d'Urfé wrote his novel *l'Astrée* which caused us to prefer, and on very just grounds, his charming shepherds of the Lignon to the extravagant champions of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. From then on the fury of imitation fastened on all those to whom nature had given the taste for this type of writing. The astonishing success of *l'Astrée*, which was still being read in the middle of this century, had completely fired all imaginations, and it was copied without being equalled. Gomberville, la Calprenède, Desmarets and Scudéry thought to surpass their original by putting princes or kings in the place of the shepherds of the Lignon, and they fell into the error that their model had avoided. La Scudéry made the same mistake as her brother; like him she wished to ennoble the style of d'Urfé, and like him she substituted tiresome heroes for the charming shepherds. Instead of representing in the character of Cinna a prince such as Herodotus had painted she created an Artamène more foolish than all the characters of *l'Astrée*. . . a lover who could only weep from morning to night, and whose languors tax our patience instead of holding our interest.' The same drawbacks are seen in her

Clélie, in which she attributes to the Romans, whom she makes unnatural, all the extravagances of the models she was following, and who have never been more disfigured.

Let us be allowed to retrace our steps for a moment to fulfil the promise we made just now of having a glance at Spain.

Certainly, if chivalry had inspired our story-tellers in France, to what a degree had it not equally uplifted the minds across the mountains. The catalogue of Don Quixote's library, so amusingly compiled by Miguel Cervantès reveals this plainly, but however this may be, the celebrated author of the memoirs of the greatest madman who has ever entered the brain of a story teller has indisputably no rivals. His immortal work, which must be considered as the first of all the novels, is known throughout the world, translated into every language and process without any doubt more than any other, the art of narrating, of pleasantly interweaving incidents, and particularly of giving instruction at the same time as amusement. 'This book,' said Saint Evremond, 'is the only one that I reread without becoming bored, and the only one that I would like to have created.' The twelve stories of the same author, all filled with interest, wit and finesse, succeed in placing in the very first rank this celebrated Spanish writer without whom perhaps we would not have had either the charming works of Scarron or the majority of those of Lesage.

After d'Urfé and his imitators, after the Arianes, the Cleopatras, the Pharamonds and the Polixandres, all those works in fact in which the hero, sighing his way through nine volumes, was extremely lucky to be read in the tenth; as I was saying, after all this heap of now unintelligible rubbish there appeared Madame de la Fayette who, although seduced by the languorous tone which she found established in her predecessors, was nevertheless considerably briefer, and by becoming more concise, she made herself more interesting. It has been said, because she was a woman (as if this sex, naturally more delicate, and better suited to writing novels, could not in this field lay claim to far more laurels than we), it has been

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claimed, I was saying, that, with an infinite amount of assistance, La Fayette only composed her novels with the help of La Rochefoucauld for the thought, and of Segrais for the style. However that may be, there is nothing more interesting than *Zayde*, nothing written so agreeably as *La Princesse de Clèves*. Charming and delightful woman, if the Graces were holding your quill, was love, therefore, not permitted to guide it sometimes?

Fénelon appeared and thought that he was making himself interesting by poetically dictating a lesson to sovereigns who never followed it. Voluptuous lover of Guion, your soul had need to love, your mind to portray. By abandoning pedantry or the pride of teaching government, you would have given us masterpieces instead of a book that no one reads any more. That will never be the case with you, delicious Scarron; until the end of the world your immortal novel will inspire laughter, and your scenes will never grow old. *Télémaque*, who had but a century to live, perished in the ruins of this century which already is no more; but your actors of Le Mans, dear delightful child of folly, will amuse even the gravest readers as long as there are men on the earth.

Towards the end of the same century, the daughter of the famous Poisson (Madame de Gomez), in a style quite different from that of the writers of the same sex who had preceded her, wrote works which for all that were none the less agreeable; and her amusing journals, as well as her hundred stories, will always, despite their many failings, provide the basis of the libraries of all the amateurs of this mode. Gomez understood her art, and no one can deny her that just praise. Mademoiselle de Lussan, Mesdames de Ténin, de Graffigny, Elie de Beaumont and Riccoboni rivalled her; their writings, full of taste and delicacy, assuredly do honour to their sex. The *lettres Peruviennes* of de Graffigny will always remain a model of tenderness and affection, just as those of *Milady Catesby* by Riccoboni will be of eternal service to those who demand only grace and lightness of style. But let us return to the century we have left, stimulated by the desire to praise some lovable women who in

this field gave such good lessons to the men.

The epicureanism of the Ninons de Lenclos, the Marion de Lormes, the Marquises de Sévigné and de Lafare, the Chaulieus and the Saint Evremords, in fact of all that charming society which turned its back on the langours of the God of Cytherea and began to think like Buffon that *there was nothing good in love, but the physical*, soon changed the tone of the novel. The writers who appeared next felt that insipidities would no longer amuse an age which had been perverted by the Regent, an age that turned away from chivalrous follies, religious extravagances and the adoration of woman; and finding it more simple to amuse or to corrupt these women than to serve or idolise them, they created events, scenes and conversations more in tune with the spirit of the times. They swathed immoralities in cynicism, employing a pleasant, waggish, sometimes even philosophical style, and at least they pleased even if they did not instruct.

Crébillon wrote *Le Sopha*, *Tanzai*, *Les Egarements du Cœur et de l'Esprit*, etc. All novels which smiled on vice and banished virtue; but which, when presented, were to aspire to the greatest success.

Marivaux, more original in his manner of portrayal, more vigorous, did at least offer characters, captivate the soul and cause tears to be shed; but how could a man with such power have a style so precious, so mannered? He is sure proof that nature never grants a novelist all the gifts that are necessary for the perfection of his art.

Voltaire's intention was quite different. Having no other aim beyond inserting philosophy in his novels, he abandoned everything for this project. With what skill he succeeded, and despite all criticisms, *Candide* and *Zadig* will always be masterpieces!

Rousseau, to whom nature had accorded in sentiment and delicacy what she had given Voltaire in wit alone, treated the novel in quite a different fashion. What vigour, what energy in *Héloïse*! Where Momus dictated *Candide* to Voltaire, Love traced with his torch each burning page of Julie, and it

can rightly be said that this sublime book will never have imitators. Would that truth would cause the pens to fall from the hands of that crowd of ephemeral writers who for the last thirty years have not ceased giving us bad copies of that immortal original. May they realise then that to equal it they need a soul of fire like Rousseau's, and a philosophic intellect like his, two things that nature does not bring together twice in the same century.

Far removed from all this, Marmontel gave us tales which he called moral, not (so says an estimable man of letters) to teach morality, but because they depicted our moral customs, a little too much, however, in the mannered fashion of Marivaux; besides, what are these tales? Puerilities, written solely for women and children, and that you would never believe came from the same hand that wrote *Bélisaire*, a work which alone would suffice for its author's glory. Must the man who created the fifteenth chapter of this book then pretend to the small glory of having given us these milk-and-water tales?

Finally the English novels, the vigorous works of Richardson and Fielding, were to teach the French that it is not in painting the fastidious languishings of love, or the tiresome conversations of the boudoir, that success in this field was to be won, but by penning virile characters, the playthings and victims of that effervescence of the heart known as love, who show us at one and the same time both its dangers and its misfortunes. From that alone it is possible to obtain these developments and passions so well traced in English novels. It is Richardson and Fielding who have taught us that only the profound study of the heart of man, that veritable labyrinth of nature, can inspire the novelist, whose work must make us see man not only for what he is or what he shows of himself, (that is the duty of the historian) but for what he may become, for what he may be made by the modifications of vice and the blows of passion. It is necessary therefore to know them all and to employ them all if you wish to work this field. We learnt also that it is not always by making virtue triumph that interest is maintained; that it is quite certainly necessary

to aim at it as far as possible, but that this rule, existing neither in nature nor in Aristotle, but being only one to which we would wish that all men subjected themselves for the sake of our happiness, is by no means at all essential in the novel, and is not even one which must compel interest. For when virtue triumphs, things being what they should be, our tears dry up before they begin to flow, but if after the severest afflictions we at last see virtue crushed down by vice, our souls cannot escape harrowing, and the work, having moved us exceedingly, having, as Diderot said, *steeped our hearts throughout in blood*, must indubitably evoke interest which is the only surety of fame.

Let us ask this question: if after twelve or fifteen volumes the immortal Richardson had ended *virtuously* by converting Lovelace, and making him marry Clarissa *quietly*, would we, reading this novel taken in the reversed fashion, have shed the delicious tears that it draws from every sensitive creature? It is therefore nature that we must grapple with when working in this sphere, it is the heart of man, the most remarkable of all his works, and not virtue at all, because virtue, however beautiful and necessary it may be, is nevertheless but one of the moods of this astonishing heart: the profound study of which is so necessary to the novelist, and every twist of which the novel, that faithful mirror of this heart, must necessarily plot.

And you, Prevost, masterly translator of Richardson, to whom we must owe the passing into our language of the beauties of this celebrated author, should we not pay you an equally well merited tribute of praise on your own account, and have you not a just claim to be called the French Richardson? You alone possessed the art of long interesting us with complex fables by always maintaining attention while yet dividing it. You alone always handled your episodes so well that the principal intrigue was to gain rather than to suffer from their abundance or complexity. Thus this multitude of incidents for which Laharpe reproaches you is not only what produces the most sublime effect in your works but at the

same time what best reveals both the magnanimity of your spirit and the excellence of your genius.

Les Mémoires d'un Homme de Qualité moreover (to add to what we think of Prévost what others besides us have equally thought), *Cleveland*, the *Histoire d'une Grecque Moderne*, *Le Monde Moral*, and above all *Manon Lescaut** are filled with these moving and terrible scenes which invincibly affect and compel us; the situations in these works, so happily administered, lead up to those moments in which nature trembles with horror, etc. And there we have what it means to write a novel; that it what will assure Prévost a place in posterity to which none of his rivals will attain.

Next came the writers of the middle of this century: Dorat, as mannered as Marivaux, as cold, as little concerned with morals as Crébillon; but a more likeable writer than the two to whom we are comparing him. The frivolity of his age excuses his own, and he had the art of skilfully capturing it.

Charming author of *La Reine de Golconde*** will you allow me to offer you a laurel wreath? Seldom has there been a more agreeable wit, and the prettiest tales of the century are not worth the one which immortalises you. At once more likeable and more fortunate than Ovid, since, by recalling you to the bosom of your motherland, the Saviour-Hero of France proves that he is as much the friend of Apollo as of Mars, then respond to this great man's hopes by placing still more of your lovely roses on the breast of fair Aline.

Darnaud, the rival of Prévost, may often claim to have surpassed him; both dipped their pens into the Styx, but Darnaud sometimes tempered his on the skirts of Elysium.

* What tears are those we shed on reading this delightful work! How it depicts nature, how interest is maintained and how by degrees it is increased! What difficulties are vanquished! What a philosopher to have conjured up all this interest in a ruined girl! would it be saying too much in daring to affirm that this work has right to the title of our best novel, it was in this that Rousseau saw that despite her rashness and blunders a heroine could still claim to move us to pity, and perhaps we would never have had Julie without *Manon Lescaut*.

** *Le Chevalier de Boufflers*. (Trans.)

Prévost, the more powerful, never falsified the colouring of him from whom he drew Cleveland.

R. . . * inundates the public, he needs a press at the head of his bed; happily even that alone would groan at his terrible production. A base pedestrian style adventures of the most disgusting kind, always culled from the worst society; in short no other merit than that of prolixity. . . for which the spice-mongers alone will thank him.

Perhaps it is here that we should analyse these new novels in which sorcery and phantasmagoria constitute almost their entire merit, by placing at their head *The Monk*, superior in all its connections to the bizarre flights of Mrs. Radcliffe's brilliant imagination. But this dissertation would be too long; let us agree that this style, whatever may be said about it is undoubtedly not without merit. It was the inevitable fruit of the revolutionary shocks felt by the whole of Europe. For one who knew all the miseries with which the wicked can afflict humanity the novel became as difficult to create as it was monotonous to read. There was not a single individual who had not experienced more misfortune in four or five years than the most famous novelist in literature could paint in a century. It was therefore necessary to call Hell to one's aid in order to draw up a title to our interest and to find in the country of chimeras that which we are only too easily acquainted with when we scan the history of man alone in this age of steel. But what drawbacks are presented by this style of writing! The author of *The Monk* has no more avoided them than Mrs. Radcliffe. Of two courses here, one is inevitable, either you must unravel the mysteries, and cease from then on to be interesting, or you must never raise the curtain, and then you find yourself in the most frightful impossibilities. If a work in this style should ever appear that is good enough to achieve its aim without foundering on one or the other of these reefs, then far from reproaching it with its devices, we would offer it as a model.

* Restif de la Bretonne. (Trans.)

Before starting upon our third and last question, *what are the rules of the art of novel writing*, we ought, it seems to me, to answer the perpetual objection of certain atrabilious spirits who in order to give themselves the veneer of an ethic that is often very foreign to their heart never cease to ask you *what good are novels?*

What good are they, perverse hypocritical men, for you are the only ones to ask this ridiculous question; they are good for painting you just as you are, vain individuals, who would like to escape the pen because you fear its effects. The novel, being, if it is possible to define it thus, *the portrait of a long customs*, is as essential as history to the philosopher who will understand man; for the brush of the latter only paints him when he makes himself seen, and then it is no longer he. Ambition and pride cover his face with a mask that only represents to us these two passions, and not the man. On the other hand, the pen of the novelist pierces his innermost thoughts. . . catches him when the mask is off, and this much more interesting sketch is at the same time much truer. That is the usefulness of the novel. And you cold censurers who do not like it, you resemble that hobbledehoy who also asked, *and why does one paint portraits?*

If then it is true that the novel is useful, let us not be afraid to outline here some of the principles that we believe necessary to bring this art to its perfection. I fully realise that it is difficult to accomplish this task without providing weapons to be used against myself. Would I not be doubly guilty of not having *done well*, if I prove that I know what is necessary *to do well*. Ah! let us abandon these vain considerations, let them be sacrificed to the love of art.

The most essential knowledge that is demanded is most certainly the understanding of the heart of man. Now this important understanding, and all the best minds will doubtless approve this assertion of ours, is only acquired through misfortune and travel. You must have seen the men of every race to know them well, and you must have been their victim to know how to appreciate them. The hand of ill-fortune, by

exalting the character of him she crushes, places it in the right and necessary perspective for the study of men; from there the victim sees them as the traveller sees the waves breaking in fury against the rocks on which the tempest has flung him. But in whatever situation nature or fate has placed him, let him, if he wishes to know men, say little when he is with them. You learn nothing when you talk, you only learn by listening; and that is why chatters are commonly but fools.

O, you who would pursue this thorny career, never forget that the novelist is the man of nature, she has created him to be her painter. If he suffers this burning thirst to portray all, if tremulously he gropes for nature's breast, there to seek his art, and there to draw his models, if he possesses the fever of talent and the enthusiasm of genius, let him obey the hand which guides him, he has found the clue to man, he will portray him. Let him yield to that imagination which has mastered him, let him embellish what he sees. The fool plucks a rose and tears away its petals, the man of genius inhales its fragrance and paints it. That is the man whom we shall read.

But in advising you to embellish, I forbid you to depart from probability. The reader has the right to be annoyed when he sees that too much is being asked of him, when he sees that you would make a dupe of him. His self-esteem is hurt, and he no longer believes anything, once he suspects you wish to cheat him.

With no barriers, moreover, to restrain you, use lightly the right to impugn the anecdotes of history, when the bursting of this restraint becomes necessary for the pleasures that you are preparing for us. Once again we do not demand that you be truthful, but only that you be probable. To ask too much of you would be to harm the delights that we await: do not however replace the true by the impossible, and that which you invent will be well said. We only excuse your putting your imagination in the place of the truth on the express condition that you adorn and dazzle. No one ever has the right to speak badly when he can say whatever he likes. If like R. . . you only write *what everybody knows* and should you, like him,

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give us four volumes a month, it is not worth the trouble of taking up your pen. Nobody is forcing you to accept this craft; but if you do undertake it, do it well. Above all do not adopt it as an aid to your existence. Your work will be the worse for your needs, to it you will transmit your weakness, it will have the pallor of hunger. Other occupations present themselves for you; make shoes, and do not write books. We will not esteem you any the less, and since you will not be boring us, perhaps we may love you the more.

Once you have set down your sketch, work ardently to extend it, but without imprisoning yourself within the limits that it seemed at first to demand of you. With this method you will become cold and meagre. It is wings that we require of you, not rules. Exceed your plans, vary them, add to them. It is only by working that the ideas flow. Why do you not want the idea that besets you when you are composing to be as good as that dictated by your sketch? Essentially I demand of you but one thing, and that is to sustain the interest until the final page. You will miss your goal if you break up your narrative by incidentals that are either too repetitive or irrelevant to the subject. Let those that you allow yourself be even more carefully treated than the central theme: you owe the reader some compensations when you make him leave what interests him to embark upon some incidental. He may allow you to interrupt him, but he will not forgive you for boring him. Always make your episodes arise out of the essence of your subject and then return to it. If you make your heroes travel, be well acquainted with the countries to which you take them. Carry the magic to the point of identifying me with them. Imagine that I am walking at their side, in all the regions in which you place them, and that, perhaps more knowing than yourself, I will not excuse either an improbability in customs, or an error in costume, still less a mistake in geography. Since nobody is forcing these escapades upon you, it is imperative that your local descriptions be real, or else you must keep to your own fireside. It is the one case in all your works in which invention may not be suffered, unless the country to which

you transport me is imaginary, and on this hypothesis even, I still demand probability.

Avoid the affectation of a moral; we do not look for it in a novel. If the characters that your plan demands are sometimes forced to reason, let it always be without conceit, without claiming the right to do so. It is never the author who should moralise, but the character, and even then he is only allowed to do so when compelled by circumstances.

Once you reach the climax, let it be natural, never constrained, never engineered, but always born of circumstances. I do not demand of you, like the authors of the *Encyclopédie*, that it conform to the desire of the reader. What pleasure would be left him if he has guessed everything? The climax should be such that events prepare it, probability exacts it, and imagination inspires it. And let your mind and your spirit relax with these principles that I am imposing, if you do not do well, at least you will do better than we. For it must be admitted, in the stories we are going to read, the audacious flight that we are allowed to take is not always in accord with the severity of the rules of the art; but we hope that the extreme truthfulness of the characters will perhaps prove a recompense. Nature, more bizarre than the moralists depict her to us, escapes at every moment from the confines that those gentlemen would like to prescribe for her. Uniform in her plans, irregular in her effects, her ever-stirring womb resembles the crater of some volcano from which in turn are cast up either precious stones which serve man's luxury or balls of fire which destroy him; magnificent when she peoples the earth with many an Antonius and a Titus, frightful when she vomits up an Andronicus or a Nero, but always sublime, always majestic, always worthy of our studies, our pens and our respectful admiration, because her designs are unknown to us, because, slaves as we are to her caprices and her needs, it is never upon what we are made to suffer that we should regulate our feelings for her, but upon her grandeur and her might, whatever their results may be.

As minds become corrupted and a nation grows old, by

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virtue, of the fact that nature is studied more, and analysed better, that prejudices are better destroyed, it is necessary to get to know them further. This law is the same for all the arts, it is only by advancing that they become perfected, they only arrive at their goal by means of trying. Doubtless it was not necessary to go so far in those frightful times of ignorance when, crushed beneath the iron yoke of religion, those who wished to appraise them were punished with death, and the Inquisition's faggots were the rewards of talent. But in our present state, let us always set forth from this principle, when man has weighed up all the checks, when with an audacious glance he measures up his barriers, when with the example of the Titans he dares to lift his bold hand against the Heavens, and, armed with his passions as the former were with the coals of Vesuvius, he no longer fears to declare war on those who formerly made him tremble, when even his *delinquencies* seem no more to him than *errors* justified by his studies, then should one not speak to him with the same force that he himself employs in his behaviour? The man of the eighteenth century, in short, is he then the man of the eleventh?

Let us finish with a positive assurance that the stories that we offer today will be absolutely new, and in no way embroideries of known sources. This quality is perhaps of some merit in an age when everything appears to have been *done*, when the exhausted imaginations of authors seem no longer able to create anything new, and when the public is no longer offered anything but complexities, extracts or translations.

Nevertheless *La Tour Enchantée** and *La Conspiration d'Ambois** have certain historical bases: it may be seen from the sincerity of our admissions how far we are from wishing to deceive the reader. One must be original in this work or take no part in it.

This is what in each of these stories you may find in the sources that we indicate.

The Arab historian *Abul-caecim-terif-aben-lariq*, a writer

* Two stories in *Les Crimes de l'Amour*. (Trans.)

hardly known to the literary men of our day, recounts the following, on the subject of the Enchanted Tower:

'Rodrigue, an unmanly prince, attracted to his court, from an instinct of voluptuousness, the daughters of his vassals, and abused them. Florinda, the daughter of Count Julian, was of their number. He violated her. Her father who was in Africa received this news in an allegorical letter from his daughter; he raised the Moors and returned to Spain at their head. Rodrigue did not know what to do, with no funds in his treasuries anywhere. He went to ransack the Enchanted Tower near Toledo, where he had been told he ought to find immense sums. He entered it and saw a statue of Time which struck with its club, and on an inscription announced to Rodrigue all the disasters which awaited him. The prince advanced and saw a great vat of water, but no money. He retraced his steps; he caused the door to be locked; a thunderbolt destroyed this building of which nothing remains but the merest traces. The king, despite these fatal omens, gathered together an army, fought for eight days near Cordova, and was killed without his body ever being recovered.'

This is what history has provided for us. Now read our work and see if the multitude of events that we have added to the dryness of these facts merits or not our regarding the anecdote as our private property.*

As for the conspiracy of Amboise, read it in Garnier, and it will be seen how little we have borrowed from history.

No guide has preceded us in the other stories. Theme, narrative, episodes, all is ours. Perhaps it may be none the

* This anecdote is that with which *Brigandas* begins in the episode in the novel of *Aline et Valcour* entitled *Samville et Leonore* and which interrupts the circumstance of the body found in the tower. The plagiarists of this episode, in copying it word for word, have not failed to copy also the first four lines of the anecdote which is found in the mouth of the chief of the Bohemians. It is therefore as essential for us at this moment as for those who buy novels to warn them that the work which is sold at Pigoreau and Leroux' under the title of *Valmor et Lidia* and at Clérion and Moutardier's under that of *Alzonde et Koradin* are absolutely the same thing, and both of them literally looted word by word from the episode of *Samville et Léonore* which forms almost three volumes of my novel *Aline et Valcour*.

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happier for it, what matter, we have always believed and we shall never cease to be convinced that it is better to invent, even if one is weak, than to copy or to translate. The one has a claim to genius, it is at least one of them. What may be the claim of the plagiarist? I know no baser trade, no confessions more humiliating than those to which such men are constrained, in themselves admitting that they must inevitably lack intellect, since they are obliged to borrow that of other men.

With regard to the translator, God forbid we rob him of his merit, but he only increases the estimation of our rivals, and if it were only for the honour of the Fatherland, would it not be more worthy to say to these proud rivals *and we also know how to create*.

Finally, I must reply to the censures made on me about *Aline et Valcour* appeared. My pen, it was said, is too strong, attributes to vice characteristics that are too odious. And do you wish to know the reason? I do not wish to make vice liked. I do not have like Crébillon and Dorat the dangerous intent of making women love the persons who deceive them. On the contrary, I want them to detest them. It is the only way to prevent them from becoming their dupes, and to succeed in this I have rendered those of my heroes who follow a career of vice so terrible that they will quite certainly inspire neither pity nor love. In this, I dare to say, I am more moral than those who believed themselves permitted to enhance them. The pernicious works of such authors resemble those fruits of America which beneath the most brilliant colouring carry death within their bosoms. This treachery of nature, the reason for which it is not for us to unveil, is not designed for man. Never, in fact, and this I repeat, never will I paint crime other than ~~in~~ the colours of Hell. I want it to be seen in all its nakedness, to be feared, to be loathed, and I know no other means of achieving that than by showing it in all the horror that characterises it. Woe to those who surround it with roses, their aims are not so pure, and I will never copy them. Following from these principles, therefore, let no one attribute to me

any longer the novel of J. . .*; never have I composed such works, and assuredly I never will. It is only the stupid or the malicious who despite the authenticity of my denials can still suspect or accuse me of being its author, and henceforth the most supreme contempt will be the only weapon with which I shall combat their calumnies.

* Justine. (Trans)

**ZOLOE ET SES DEUX ACOLYTES
OU QUELQUES DECADES DE LA
VIE DE TROIS JOLIES FEMMES**

ZOLOE ET SES DEUX ACOLYTES, OU QUELQUES DECADES DE LA VIE DE TROIS JOLIES FEMMES

Written in 1800, this book was an undisguised attack on Napoleon and the Empress Josephine; they appeared in the book under the respective names of Baron d'Orsec and Zoloé, and although the story seems now to be inoffensive and merely silly it led to de Sade's arrest, on a charge concerning *La Nouvelle Justine*.

* * * * *

PO R T R A I T O F Z O L O É

Zoloé, who is approaching forty, has none the less the same pretension to please that she had at twenty-five. The credit in which she is held draws to her the crowd of courtesans and supplements, in some way, the graces of youth. In addition to a very delicate wit, a character adaptable or proud according to circumstances, a very insinuating tone of voice, a consummate faculty for hypocritical dissimulation, in addition to everything that can seduce and captivate she brings an ardour for pleasure a hundred times more strong than Laureda, the avidity of a usurer for money, which she dissipates with the promptitude of a gambler, and the unbridled luxury which would swallow up the revenue of ten provinces.

Zoloé was never beautiful; but at fifteen she was already a refined coquette, with this flower of youth which often serves as a passport for love, and great riches had attached a swarm of adoring men to her chariot.

Far from dispersing on her marriage to the Count of Barmont, who was well known to the court, all these admirers swore not to be wretched, and Zoloé, the sensitive Zoloé, could not decide to make them break their vow. From this union

were born a son and a daughter, attached today to the fortune of their illustrious father-in-law.

Zoloé originates from America. Her possessions in the colonies are immense: but the troubles which have devastated these mines, so fruitful for Europeans, have cut her off from the yield of these rich domains, which would have been so necessary here to sustain her prodigal magnificence.

PORTRAIT OF THE BARON D'ORSEC

'Indeed,' said the Lord, 'they speak of her marrying the Baron d'Orsec'.

'Lauréda has confided this secret to me,' the Spaniard said gravely. 'Can you imagine such a union?'

'I can see,' replied the Italian, 'that you do not know the Baron. This man thinks of nothing except fame and every type of fame. He does not confine himself to being another Caesar, a Pericles or a Solon. He wants to give to the world an example of all the virtues which have honoured humanity. Bold in his fighting, it is to show to the soldier the road to victory. Impenetrable in council he only collects opinions in order to perfect his own, and the one he adopts is always the best or the most successful. The future unfurls itself before his eyes. He will be everything that the destiny of his country allows him to be. He only works for its happiness. He would go to the ends of the earth to win new laurels, provided that they contribute to the prosperity of his country. . . The present government is palpably absurd: he admires it and fears it, but the people see nothing in him except a hero; the hero will save them; the plan of his success is mapped out in his head; sooner or later he will put it into operation; right-minded people will sigh for that happy moment.

LORD FORBESS: He is the only man whose politics, value and wisdom are feared by the English. But we have Pitt, and a few guineas more or less could easily rid us of him.

THE SPANIARD: What are you saying, Forbess? It is horrible; no, the English people are too noble in spirit to want to use means so cowardly.

LORD FORBESS: Have I not mentioned Pitt?

THE ITALIAN: Pitt will fail in his plots. The spirit of France and his wisdom protect him. But if you do not realise the aim of the marriage in question, here it is. All the parties in France cut across one another and clash together, there is no rallying point. Those whom we call aristocrats detest the domination of men smothered in crimes and blood. The furious demagogue is angry at seeing that people dare to muzzle him and that those in power abandon him in his disgrace. The fearful and the indifferent, who form the greatest number, invoke one master alone who unites courage with perspicacity, virtue with talent, and they find all that in d'Orsec. His marriage with Zoloé attaches to him a proscribed class. The renown of his victories does not allow envy to be offended by them. He has shown his proofs of justice and honour towards all the parties: all esteem and revere him like a friend or a superior man.

LORD FORBESS: May it be as fortune decrees. I don't want to tire myself over it here. Here I am in France; if peace reigns there, I shall be a citizen of France, if not I shall see my household gods again. I only know d'Orsec through his reputation and his triumphs. He can only protect all men who are friends of peace and public order. As for me, I only want to enjoy myself. It matters little to me under which pilot I reach port, provided that I get there without distress and without shipwreck.'

TESTAMENT

TESTAMENT

When Jules Janin published this portion of de Sade's will in 1834 he left out the last part of the last sentence, stopping at 'the minds of men'. He disapproved strongly of de Sade and apparently did not wish to show that de Sade was capable of affection. The early part of the will has never been published.

All de Sade's last wishes concerning his burial were ignored.

* * * * *

DE SADE'S WILL

I forbid my body to be opened under any pretext whatsoever. I demand with the greatest insistence that it should be kept forty-eight hours in the room where I shall die, placed in a wooden coffin which will only be nailed down after the forty-eight hours referred to above, on the expiration of which the said coffin will be closed; during this time a dispatch shall be sent to the Sieur Lenormand, wood merchant, Boulevard l'Egalité No. 101 at Versailles, asking him to come himself together with a wagon to take my body in order to transport it under his escort to the wood on my estate at Malmaison in the province of Mance near Epernon where I want it to be placed without any form of ceremony in the first overgrown thicket which is found on the right in the said wood as you come into it on the side of the old castle by the wide alley which divides the wood in two. My grave shall be dug in this thicket by the farmer of Malmaison under the inspection of Monsieur Lenormand, who shall not leave my body before it has been placed in the said grave. He can be accompanied during the ceremony, if he wishes, by those among my relatives or friends who without any show of mourning will want to give me this last sign of attachment. Once the grave has been filled in it shall be sown over with acorns so that afterwards the ground of the said grave having been replanted and the thicket being

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overgrown as it was before, the traces of my tomb will disappear from the surface of the earth, as I flatter myself that my memory will be effaced from the minds of men, except none-the-less from those of the small number of people who have been pleased to love me up to the last moment and of whom I carry into the grave a most tender recollection.

Made at Charenton-Saint-Maurice when of sound mind and in good health, January 30th, 1806.

signed D. A. F. SADE